Harpers Ferry Center
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park

"From Backcountry to Breadbasket, to Battlefield, and Beyond"

Interim Interpretive Plan

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park
"From Backcountry to Breadbasket, to Battlefield, and Beyond"

Interim Interpretive Plan

May 2011

Prepared by:
Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park
Harpers Ferry Center Interpretive Planning
Pond | Ecos
Faye Goolrick, Certified Interpretive Planner

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Introduction

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park, located in the northern (Lower) Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, preserves and interprets key historical sites and events related to the American Civil War and the rich cultural heritage of the valley. Established in 2002, the park encompasses the site of the Union victory at the Battle of Cedar Creek, and Belle Grove Plantation, the antebellum house and estate built by Major Isaac Hite, Jr., and his wife, Nelly Madison Hite, sister of President James Madison.

A Partnership Park

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park, still in development, has been established as a partnership park in which the National Park Service works with several nonprofit partners as well as private individuals/owners to manage park grounds and resources and provide visitor access. Of the 3,700 acres authorized by Congress as within the park's boundaries, approximately 2,200 acres remain in private hands and are not open to the public. The remaining 1,542 acres, including landscapes and historic structures, are preserved and managed by the Key Partners. These Key Partners, all non-profit or governmental organizations, include:

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Belle Grove, Inc.
- Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation
- Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation
- Shenandoah County, Virginia

NPS staffing is limited, and much of the Key Partners' work is handled by volunteers. The park does not currently have any NPS-operated visitor facilities, although the NPS park administrative headquarters is open Monday through Friday.

Two sites, Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation Headquarters (operated by the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation) and Belle Grove Plantation Manor House and historic landscape (operated by Belle Grove, Inc.), are open to the public. In addition, battlefield vistas and some battlefield monuments are visible and accessible from public roads.

Ranger conducted programs started in the summer of 2010.

An Interpretive Plan

In the planning hierarchy of the National Park Service, an interpretive plan is a vital component for helping a park focus, clearly and consistently, on the legislated purpose and national significance of a site. It also identifies audiences and plans services and programming for them. The interpretive plan supports and complements a park's *Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* (GMP) and its various resource reports.

Interpretive planning addresses fundamental issues about audience experiences to help various audiences understand things such as: Why is this site important? What is its purpose and significance? What are its primary resources, and how are they relevant to me? Why is it worth my time to visit? What can I do, learn, feel, and take away with me by visiting this site?

In most cases, an NPS site develops a seven- to ten-year Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP). This document for Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP is called an Interim Interpretive Plan because it has a shorter focus of approximately three to five years (2011 to 2016). Start-up parks such as this one have very different needs from parks with established interpretive facilities and programming. The challenge for the small staff at Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP is to focus their limited resources to establish the direction for interpretation; make sound, sustainable choices; and create a solid foundation and infrastructure for interpretation at the park.

This plan has been developed with input from the park's Federal Advisory Commission and its partners, including some 25 stakeholders and workshop participants, through a series of planning sessions held in late 2010.

Foundational elements of the General Management Plan, as echoed in this interpretive plan, are expected to remain fairly constant over the life of the GMP. One exception would be any changes made as a result of legislation.

Specific recommendations about interpretive programs or media may need to be updated as staffing, funding, technology, or resource conditions change and as new historic and scientific information comes to light. In some cases, additional design documents will need to be developed to implement some of the recommendations set forth in the plan.

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park
Virginia

National Park Service
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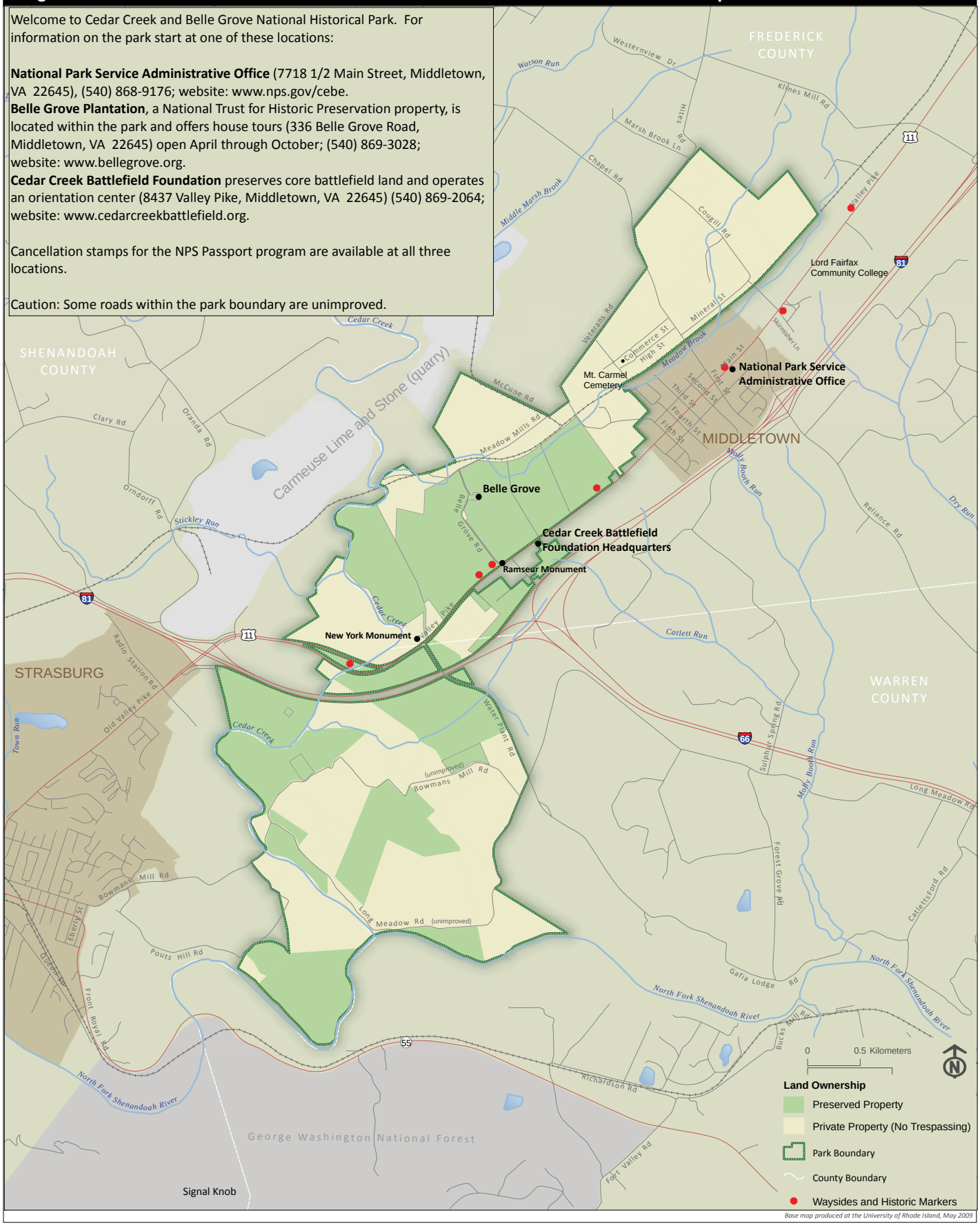
Welcome to Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. For information on the park start at one of these locations:

National Park Service Administrative Office (7718 1/2 Main Street, Middletown, VA 22645), (540) 868-9176; website: www.nps.gov/cebe.
Belle Grove Plantation, a National Trust for Historic Preservation property, is located within the park and offers house tours (336 Belle Grove Road, Middletown, VA 22645) open April through October; (540) 869-3028; website: www.bellegrove.org.
Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation preserves core battlefield land and operates an orientation center (8437 Valley Pike, Middletown, VA 22645) (540) 869-2064; website: www.cedarcreekbattlefield.org.

Cancellation stamps for the NPS Passport program are available at all three locations.

Caution: Some roads within the park boundary are unimproved.



Map of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park

Executive Summary of Recommendations

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park, a partnership park established in 2002, presents unique challenges and opportunities for interpretation. Its frame of reference is broad – i.e., "from backcountry to breadbasket to battlefield and beyond" – and its ownership is divided among six organizations, with additional eligible lands in remaining in private ownership within the park's authorized boundaries.

Interpretive Themes

Based on input during interpretive planning workshops with NPS staff, Key Partners, and other stakeholders, the 2011 Interpretive Planning team began its work by reviewing, condensing, and streamlining the broad interpretive topics identified in the founding legislation and the general management plan. After review and refinement, the following primary interpretive themes emerged as central to this interpretive plan:

Theme: The Shenandoah Valley Corridor ("Backcountry, Breadbasket, Battlefield and Beyond")

The fertile soil and an excellent transportation corridor brought wealth and prosperity to the peacetime Shenandoah Valley, but made it a target of destruction and an avenue of invasion and counter-invasion during the Civil War, bringing death and destruction and permanent change to the social order and economic life of the valley.

Theme: Natural History of the Valley

Unique geology and abundant natural resources formed the valley, settlement, and transportation patterns that fed the culture of the Shenandoah Valley.

Theme: The Peopling of the Shenandoah Valley

The Shenandoah Valley supported human settlement for thousands of years and attracted early settlers to the region where Virginia Colonial land policies promised opportunity but also presented danger as new settlers were positioned as human buffers to French and Indian territorial claims.

Theme: "The Age of Grain"

The antebellum period in the Shenandoah Valley was the "Age of Grain," when a combination of natural and cultural factors made the Shenandoah Valley the most productive wheat-producing area in the South, with Belle Grove, atypically for the region, representing the height of an agricultural and economic system based on grain and slavery.

Theme: Civil War, the Shenandoah Valley, and the Battle of Cedar Creek

The desperate and dramatic Battle of Cedar Creek established federal control of the Shenandoah Valley, ended military threats to Washington, D.C., and denied the valley's rich granary to the Confederate Army; together with the capture of Atlanta, the Battle of Cedar Creek virtually assured the reelection of Abraham Lincoln and ultimately, the Federal victory.

Summary of Recommendations

Although Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park is still in development, with significant land acquisition, resource protection, facilities, and other elements yet to come, the time to begin building an effective NPS interpretive program – and complementing and enhancing Key Partners' interpretive programs – is now.

Collaborating with Key Partners, the NPS team should seek to develop a well-documented, multi-faceted baseline interpretive program that will provide an consistent, integrated, content-rich experience for all visitors, no matter how, where, or why they arrive at the park.

The Interpretive Planning team recommends the following steps for strengthening the interpretive program over the next three years.

First of all, the park should focus on **equipping the NPS Interim Visitor Contact Station with first-rate interpretive media**, including creating a parkwide overview exhibit with professionally done interpretive panels to surround and complement the large, table-height fiber-optic map the park has recently acquired. An additional panel within the contact station should identify the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District as a whole and position the Battle of Cedar Creek prominently within this context.

Second, and perhaps most difficult, the park must **address the issue of branding and identity** by establishing a branding task force, introducing consistent new branding and design standards, and proceeding to create attractive, consistent, effecting wayfinding/identity and interpretive (content-oriented) signs throughout the park.

Third, the park should seek to **establish walking access to battlefield areas year-round**, with a goal of creating at least one well-marked walking trail, complete with interpretive signs, for regular visitor use by 2014.

Additional recommendations include:

- continuing and expanding on the model of the successful interpreter-led tours introduced by the NPS in summer 2010, with potential expansion by park partners and by driving tour/tour van;
- expanding educational programming on- and off-site for K-12 audiences; and
- developing special programming and outreach for local residents.

The park should also begin upgrading its range of interpretive media, including a basic toolkit of print, audiovisual, and web-based materials as well as exterior exhibits (kiosks or wayside interpretive signs). Among these recommendations are:

- A master map of the park and a new NPS brochure using this map;
- A master calendar of park events, made available on multiple media platforms (web, print, news media, libraries, etc.);
- A series of in-depth NPS site bulletins covering specific topics;
- A short, professionally produced park overview film for the Interim Visitor Contact Station, supplemented by other films as available;
- Additional web-based interpretive materials, including downloadable podcasts and social media;
- A comprehensive exterior exhibit plan, to be implemented in phases, to create high-quality, consistently designed interpretive wayside signs for the entire park.

Details on these and related recommendations can be found in the specified chapters within this document. Following the Recommendations section, an Implementation Plan offers guidance for prioritizing and implementing these recommendations over the next one to three years.

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S. Kettering

Foundation for Planning

Historical and Legislative Background

The quest to preserve and protect the hallowed ground of the Cedar Creek battlefield and other resources associated with the cultural heritage of the Shenandoah Valley spans nearly 40 years and several distinct national and state protection milestones.

- In 1964, the National Trust for Historic Preservation acquired Belle Grove Manor House, related buildings, and the adjoining land from a bequest by Francis Welles Hunnewell.
- In 1969, Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove Plantation (including all the properties' historic structures) received joint National Historic Landmark status.
- In 1988, the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation was chartered. This grass-roots non-profit organization was formed in order to protect 158 acres of core battlefield land that was threatened by development. The Foundation currently preserves 308 acres of the battlefield.
- In 1990, Congress passed the Civil War Sites Study Act (Public Law 101-628) and charged the NPS with studying Civil War sites and battlefields in the Shenandoah Valley. The resulting studies and recommendations identified 15 primary battlefields, examined the feasibility of adding them to the national park system, and recommended a public-private partnership approach and creation of a heritage area.
- In 1990, Bowman's Fort (Harmony Hall), the 1753 ancestral home of the pioneer Bowman family, and 94.84 acres was given to Belle Grove, Inc. by a private donor.
- In 1996, Congress passed the *Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District and Commission Act* (P.O. 104-333), which established the district as an NPS National Heritage Area. The resulting Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District Management Plan (Heritage Partners, Inc. et al 2000c) charged the NPS with completing a special resource study to determine whether the district or components of the district met the criteria for designation as a unit of the national park system.
- In 2001, the *Special Resources Study* (NPS 2001) recommended that the Cedar Creek Battlefield be included as a unit of the national park system.

Legislation

On December 19, 2002, Public Law 107-373 (116 Stat. 3104 – 3109) established Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park and established a park boundary containing a far larger area with more diverse, extensive, and privately owned resources than originally recommended in the NPS Special Resources Study. In addition to the Civil War battlefield, the newly authorized park would contain prehistoric resources, ecologically important areas, evidence of valley settlement and early European history of the region, and Belle Grove and plantation culture.

According to the legislation,

> the purpose of this Act is to establish the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park in order to
> 1. help preserve, protect, and interpret a nationally significant Civil War landscape and antebellum plantation for the education, inspiration, and benefit of present and future generations;
> 2. tell the rich story of Shenandoah Valley history from early settlement through the Civil War and beyond, and the Battle of Cedar Creek and its significance in the conduct of the war in the Shenandoah Valley;
> 3. preserve the significant historic, natural, cultural, military, and scenic resources found in the Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove Plantation areas through partnerships with local landowners and the community; and
> 4. serve as a focal point to recognize and interpret important events and geographic locations within the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District representing key Civil War battles in the Shenandoah Valley, including those battlefields associated with the Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson campaign of 1862 and the decisive campaigns of 1864.

This broad mandate also specifically acknowledges the roles of key partner organizations and grants them the right to continue to own and operate their lands within the park boundaries.

Park Purpose Statements

Park purpose statements explain why the site has been set aside as a unit of the national park system. Purpose statements are drawn from the legislation that establishes a park and function as fundamental criteria in determining future planning and management of the site.

As stated in the GMP, the purposes of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP are:

- to preserve, protect, and interpret a nationally significant Civil War landscape and antebellum agricultural community for the education, inspiration, and benefit of present and future generations to tell the rich story of Shenandoah Valley history from early settlement onward, including the Battle of Cedar Creek and its significance in the course of the Civil War.
- to preserve the significant historic, natural, cultural, military, and scenic resources found in and around the Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove Plantation areas through partnerships with local landowners and the Community.
- to serve as a focal point within the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District.
- to recognize and interpret important Civil War events and geographic locations, including the key battles and campaigns of 1862 and 1864.

Park Significance Statements

Significance statements, also drawn from the park's authorizing legislation and listed in the GMP, describe the **national significance** of a place and why it warrants designation and protection within the National Park System. The resources and values of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP are nationally significant because:

- The **Battle of Cedar Creek** was a principal strategic operation that had a decisive influence on the Valley Campaign of 1864 and a direct impact on the course of the Civil War. The Union victory contributed to the re-election of President Abraham Lincoln and nearly eliminated the Confederate military presence in the Shenandoah Valley. The battlefield and strategic landscapes at Cedar Creek retain a high degree of integrity, serve to memorialize the events of the battle, and contribute to greater understanding of the Civil War.
- Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP include well-preserved cultural and natural landscape features from the **early European settlement** of the Shenandoah Valley when the region was a frontier, including features associated with transportation, migration, and commerce.
- Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP contains historically significant examples of the antebellum **agricultural community** that defined the northern Shenandoah Valley, its ethnic and cultural traditions, merchant milling and market systems, and farm economy that included both slave labor and family farms, as well as examples of the post-Civil War transformation of a changing labor structure. A representative example of the valley's agricultural history and culture is preserved and interpreted at the nationally significant Belle Grove Manor House.
- The park's **natural and cultural landscapes** are nationally and regionally significant. The panoramic views of the mountains, natural areas, waterways, and pastoral surroundings convey an aesthetic and historic sense of 19th and 20th century life in the Shenandoah Valley, provide visitors with an inspiring setting of great natural beauty, and offer outstanding opportunities for quiet and solitude in an ever expanding suburban area.

The arrival of Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan rallied the Union forces and turned a defeat into an incredible victory at Cedar Creek. Sketch by Alfred Waud.

Interpretive Themes

What is Interpretation?

Interpretation conveys the meanings ascribed to park resources. Interpreters use facts of science and history then connect them with the meanings of the tangible resources of a site and its stories.

Interpretation is a vehicle to allow exploration of the question, "So what does science or the events of the past have to do with me and my times?" Good interpretation will convey both the *personal relevance* and *national significance* of a place as a means to explain why a site and its stories are relevant to people who are unconnected to a place or an event.

What are Interpretive Themes?

Interpretive themes are an organization tool. They are based in a park's enabling legislation – the reasons why the site is a part of the National Park System and was designated to tell a piece of the American story – and are derived from park purpose and national significance. As such, they define a framework to guide a park's interpretive management decisions, provide focus, and set direction for interpretive programming delivered through interpretive media, technology, and personal services (such as talks and tours).

Interpretive themes go beyond descriptions of events or simply stating facts in order to foster opportunities for audiences to think critically about the complexities, "shades of gray", and different perspectives of the events, stories, and issues represented in a park. Sound interpretive themes encourage exploration of the context and the effects of an event to inspire personal connections and increase understanding and appreciation of a site and its stories.

Good interpretive themes are designed to accommodate and respond to ongoing scholarship, changing perspectives, and evolving needs of society. Stories included within a theme may shift, but if designed well, the park interpretive themes remain relatively stable over an extended period of time. Themes should be resource and site-specific and not so broadly written as to apply to other sites as well.

It is important to note that park interpretive themes are an internal tool that is not necessarily intended for public consumption. What matters to the public is how the themes are presented through media and personal services programming.

Interpretive themes serve as a guide for a wide range of interpretive programming, whether the content is to be delivered via ranger-led talks, wayside signs, special events and activities, K-12 educational curricula, museum exhibits, living history reenactors, or podcasts or other new media.

"Civil War Kid's Camp" is an annual event held by the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation.

Cedar Creek Belle Grove NHP Interpretive Themes

The first iteration of themes for Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP appears in the General Management Plan. The GMP lists seven themes that are chronological periods of time and topic areas. While interpreters use chronological eras and topics, they don't meet criteria for interpretive themes. (*See the Appendix for criteria and additional information about interpretive themes*.) The interpretive plan is the place to reconfigure the themes so that they are more useful and user-friendly for interpretive programming efforts.

History, culture, and natural resources are the result of complex mixes of influences, circumstances, events, and effects that don't always fit neatly into time periods. Therefore, the themes from the GMP have been reorganized here and placed into an interpretive theme matrix.

Interpretive Theme Matrix

The interpretive theme matrix is a format that shows several levels of information about a theme all in one place and presents several ways for people to access and understand the ideas about themes contained within it.

The matrix accommodates a range of reviewers, each of whom processes information in a different way. Some people are by nature "lumpers" of information; some are "splitters." Some people think in broad terms first, then look for the details; others need the details to construct the broad picture for themselves; some people need a little of both to complete the picture. The value of the interpretive theme matrix is that it presents information for a wide range of people on a single page so that a wider number of people get what they need to understand and interpret the themes.

Each theme has:

- A **title** (for easy reference);
- An **interpretive theme statement** (characteristics of which are described above and in the Appendix).
- **Concepts and ideas** that are written as **objectives**. This section and "topics and stories" are flexible and can be added and changed to accommodate new information and perspectives.
- **Topics and stories** that represent some of the stories that can be used to illustrate a particular theme.

A useful matrix will always be a work-in-progress, a partial list. The concepts, ideas and topics in the matrix represent *some* examples representing *types* of stories that *could* illustrate the concepts. They are not intended to be all-inclusive (in fact they could never be) nor are they intended to exclude any topics or stories.

A park interpretive theme is successful only if other topics and stories could be included within it. Because it is designed to accommodate new scholarship and there are many stories that can illustrate any given theme, people should be able to see many possibilities for topics and stories that could be included under a theme. There will be some overlap in the topics and stories that could be interpreted under the themes. Ultimately, exactly which concept/objective or story a specific park topic or program fits under will depend upon the approach to a story.

How to use the matrix to organize and outline a program or exhibit: interpreters can select a theme, select one or more concepts and ideas/objectives (or write new ones), then select any stories (those listed on the matrix or other stories) that illustrate the point of the program.

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park: Interpretive Theme Matrix "From Backcountry, to Breadbasket, Battlefield, and Beyond"	
Overall Theme: The Shenandoah Valley Corridor ("Backcountry, Breadbasket, Battlefield and Beyond")	
Interpretive Theme Statement: The fertile soil and an excellent transportation corridor brought wealth and prosperity to the peacetime Shenandoah Valley, but made it a target of destruction and an avenue of invasion and counter-invasion during the Civil War, bringing death and destruction and permanent change to the social order and economic life of the valley.	
Concepts & Ideas These are examples of the concepts and ideas that may be explored within each theme. Concepts and ideas are written as objectives.*	**Topics & Stories** Examples of topics and stories that could be included in this theme.*
• Explain how the rich agricultural production of the Shenandoah Valley made it a desirable landscape for many different groups, from early American Indians to 18th-century European immigrants, Civil War leaders seeking control of food supplies for their armies, and present-day residents seeking a comfortable rural lifestyle within easy reach of urban hubs. • Describe the unique geology of the Shenandoah Valley – that it formed the valley and settlement and transportation patterns that fed the culture. • Describe the "Age of Grain"; how the valley was the Confederate "breadbasket" and thus a Union target during the Civil War. Describe the combination of natural and cultural factors made the Shenandoah Valley the most productive wheat producing area not only in Virginia, but in the entire South. • Illustrate how the Shenandoah Valley has functioned as a major transportation corridor from prehistory to the present day. Explore the iterations of human transportation corridors in the Shenandoah such as: Indian trail, valley pike, turnpike, transportation corridor, to I-81 today. Explore the tensions and contradictions of those improving transportation routes and the effects of good roads on markets and prosperity. Describe the impact of the railroads to the area. • Explore the impacts of the significant changes in land ownership, settlement patterns, and labor systems as a result of the Civil War. • Explore the issues and reality of how and why newly freed, formerly enslaved people from Belle Grove and the surrounding area left the valley for new lives in the north and west; explore the impact of the resulting labor shortage in the Shenandoah region. • Explore the causes and effects of the post-Civil War economy of the northern Shenandoah shifted abruptly from large wheat and livestock operations staffed by enslaved workers to smaller ventures focused on apple orchards and products as the new cash crop.	• Geography • Geology • Agriculture • Railroads (commerce and troops) • Indian trail, valley pike, turnpike, transportation corridor, to I-81 • The Shenandoah Valley as the first "western frontier" • Layers of "footprints" of transportation and settlement • Context of the development of the larger valley leading to the events of the Civil War • Valley as a transportation corridor for American Indian settlement and trade west of the Blue Ridge • Role of the Warriors' Path, The Great Wagon Road, the Valley Pike, valley railroad lines, and Interstate 81 in making valley resources accessible to a young and growing nation • 18th- and 19th-century milling operations along Cedar Creek • The Shenandoah Valley as a corridor for military campaigns in the Civil War • Stories of groups who lived/traveled/worked/etc. in the Shenandoah Valley: –American Indians –18th Century European immigrants –CW Generals, armies –Present-day residents • Scots-Irish, English, and German settlement in the valley • Freedman's Bureau in Winchester • Post-war lives of newly freed people from the area • What happened to Belle Grove holdings after the war • Stories of Belle Grove and other valley residents after the Civil War • Preservation messages

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park: Interpretive Theme Matrix	
"From Backcountry, to Breadbasket, Battlefield, and Beyond"	
Theme #1 Title: Natural History	
Interpretive Theme Statement: Unique geology and abundant natural resources formed the valley, settlement, and transportation patterns that fed the culture of the Shenandoah Valley.	
Concepts & Ideas These are examples of the concepts and ideas that may be explored within each theme. Concepts and ideas are written as objectives.*	**Topics & Stories** Examples of topics and stories that could be included in this theme.*
• Illustrate how the Shenandoah Valley's abundant natural resources are the result of its unique underlying geology. • Explain and illustrate the geology of the region. • Describe how two geological formations (limestone and shale) join together to create a reach ecotone.	• The Shenandoah Valley as part of the Great Valley of Virginia, the Ridge and Valley region, and related geological and natural resource details • The valley's soil, terrain, and climate for livestock farming and grain crops such as wheat and corn (as exemplified in large wheat operations like Belle Grove Plantation) • Limestone has shaped vernacular architectural styles and farming methods • Valley limestone and its uses; quarrying and its economic and environmental impact; uses of limestone in everyday Valley life • Impacts of human activities on valley ecosystems and native plant and animal life over time

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park: Interpretive Theme Matrix "From Backcountry, to Breadbasket, Battlefield, and Beyond"	
Theme #2 Title: The Peopling of the Shenandoah Valley **Interpretive Theme Statement:** The Shenandoah Valley supported human settlement for thousands of years and attracted early settlers to the region where Virginia Colonial land policies promised opportunity for settlers but also presented danger and as human buffers to French and Indian territorial claims.	
Concepts & Ideas These are examples of the concepts and ideas that may be explored within each theme. Concepts and ideas are written as objectives.*	**Topics & Stories** Examples of topics and stories that could be included in this theme.*
• Convey the various emotions experienced by some of the first pioneers, such as uncertainty, fear, and promise of life on America's "first frontier" during the colonial period. Others, especially Germans (including the Hites) felt they had "come home," so much was the Valley like their homeland along the Rhine. • Explain how, during the period of the French & Indian War, the Alleghenies were an international border between two rival European nations – France and Britain – vying for control of the continent and explore the local, regional and international ramifications of living on real estate between two superpowers. • Establish context – the Alleghenies were an international border (to 1763) and the insecurity that that manifested in settlers, and the effects of that insecurity on the settler population. • Explore the social, cultural, and political context and climate of the Shenandoah Valley. • Explore the influence of the tension created by people from places like Pennsylvania who were not wealthy, had no slaves, and the influence they had in Civil War-era alliances. • Explore the clash of cultures when settlers in the valley became slave owners and the effect that slaveholding and a slave economy had on the Shenandoah Valley. • Explain reasons why the Shenandoah Valley attracted diverse groups of pioneers from the northeast, the eastern seaboard and Europe. • Describe how the fertile terrain of the Shenandoah Valley supported human settlement for thousands of years, including thriving American Indian populations long before the arrival of settlers of European descent. • Provide historical evidence of pre-contact and contact-era Native Americans such as the Piedmont Siouans, Catabas, Shawnee, Delaware, Northern Iroquois, Cherokee, and Susquehannocks and describe what that evidence tells about their lifestyles and traditional uses of the land. • Early settlement history of the valley and its role and influences in the founding of a new America.	• Early exploration of the Valley region • Personal histories of individual settlers • Political, religious and economic factors affecting early settlement • The importance, history and methodology of land surveys and surveyors • The creation (chartering) of the earliest Valley towns • Global context (English and French) • Pioneers • Tools, equipment and lifestyles of the earliest settlers • Land grant system • German culture in the valley • Indian treaties- Shawnees and Iroquois divisions, British intervention in the matter • The French and Indian War • English, Scots-Irish, German, African-American, and others (male and female) who migrated to and lived in the colonial-era Shenandoah Valley • Characteristics of settlers' communities and lifestyles (religion, education/social standing, housing and farming methods, attitudes toward slavery) • Opposing values of cultures among settlers over slavery • Role of land grants to encourage settlement • Relationships among various American Indian tribes, settlers, and French and British governors • Bowman's Fort (Harmony Hall) and the Hite-Bowman-Madison family as representative of early settlement in the region • Archeological evidence of how and when earliest humans lived in the Shenandoah Valley • Historical evidence of lifestyles of pre-contact and contact-era American Indian populations such as the Piedmont Siouans, Catabas, Shawnee, Delaware, Northern Iroquois, Cherokee, and Susquehannocks • First-hand accounts of first contacts between American Indians and European immigrant settler • Indian use of land for hunting; Indian treaties • The impact of the Revolutionary War in the valley

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park: Interpretive Theme Matrix "From Backcountry, to Breadbasket, Battlefield, and Beyond"	
Theme #3 Title: "The Age of Grain"	
Interpretive Theme Statement: The antebellum period in the Shenandoah Valley was the "Age of Grain" when a combination of natural and cultural factors made the Shenandoah Valley the most productive wheat producing area in the South; with Belle Grove, atypical for the region, representing the height of agricultural and economic system based on grain and slavery.	
Concepts & Ideas These are examples of the concepts and ideas that may be explored within each theme. Concepts and ideas are written as objectives.*	**Topics & Stories** Examples of topics and stories that could be included in this theme.*
• Illustrate how a combination of natural and cultural factors made the Shenandoah Valley the most productive wheat producing area in the South. • Explain how grain created wealth – both in its "powdered and liquid form" – and how that wealth manifested itself throughout the Shenandoah Valley and in the extant resources of the park. Convey the importance wheat had on valley inhabitants. • Compare and contrast plantation system agriculture at Belle Grove and farming in the rest of the region. • Describe how antebellum Belle Grove was an innovative, scientifically progressive farming operation that took advantage of rich Shenandoah farmland to develop large-scale wheat farming, cattle and Merino sheep, a large distillery, a grist mill, and saw mills. Describe "scientific farming" progressive farming practices; use of lime to make farming more productive. • Describe the social context that enabled the lifestyle and economy of the Shenandoah Valley and specifically at Belle Grove. • Explain how the elegant lifestyle of Belle Grove Manor House and the intensive agriculture of its plantation were supported by the forced labor of more than 100 men, women, and children of African descent held as slaves. • Describe Belle Grove's Georgian/Federalist architectural design, locally quarried limestone, hand-carved woodwork, fine furnishings, and convey how the restored interiors of reflect the talents and tastes of elite Virginians. • Compare/contrast an atypical plantation like Belle Grove with the more commonly owned smaller family farms with no slave labor (such as the Heater House) and the lifestyles of each.	• Agricultural production in early 1800s at Belle Grove • Farming practices in the rest of the region • The story of the Heater House (including the Hoge and Baldwin families who sold their 500 acre farm to the Hites, on which Belle Grove was built, and the Heater family who owned and managed the farm during the 1800s) • Combination of geological, environmental and natural factors that made the valley perfect location for commercial wheat production • Belle Grove was the exception and not the norm of agricultural production in the valley • The immense importance of wheat production on everyday life of the residents of the valley • Innovations such as crops rotation, lime on fields, machinery patents, use of sheepdogs, Patents, threshing equipment, etc. • Bowman and Hite mills along Cedar Creek • Jefferson's and Madison's influence on new farming practices at Belle Grove • The business acumen and duties of plantation owner Isaac Hite, Jr. • How enslaved people lived at Belle Grove: duties, living quarters, family life • Harriet Cooley's death at the hand of a slave and how her brothers paid for a lawyer for her [whose brothers? Lawyer for whom? The slave?] • The human (enslaved) labor involved in creating the everyday life (hot water, clean clothes, light and heat, etc.) • Lives of various whites and blacks in the antebellum period • Local craftsmen, including enslaved people, who contributed to the creation of Belle Grove house and ground • Furnishings within the house – surviving examples of 18th/19th-century English and American decorative arts. Connect these furnishings to the larger stories and what they illustrate about Belle Grove residents.

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park: Interpretive Theme Matrix "From Backcountry, to Breadbasket, Battlefield, and Beyond"	
Theme #4 Title: Civil War, the Shenandoah Valley, and the Battle of Cedar Creek **Interpretive Theme Statement:** The desperate and dramatic Battle of Cedar Creek established federal control of the Shenandoah Valley, ended military threats to Washington D.C. and denied the valley's rich granary to the Confederate Army; and, combined with the capture of Atlanta, the Battle of Cedar Creek virtually assured the reelection of Abraham Lincoln and ultimately, to Federal victory.	
Concepts & Ideas These are examples of the concepts and ideas that may be explored within each theme. Concepts and ideas are written as objectives.*	**Topics & Stories** Examples of topics and stories that could be included in this theme.*
• Describe how the victory at Cedar Creek gave Union supporters (both military and political) the momentum they needed to push the war effort forward until the Confederacy was soundly defeated – thus preserving the unity of the United States. • Illustrate how President Abraham Lincoln's political future – specifically, his reelection in 1864 – depended on the success of the war efforts under his command. Scrutinize the fears that the Democratic Party nominee, former Union General George McClellan, would negotiate a peace treaty with the Confederacy if elected. • Explain why the Shenandoah Valley was a major theater of operations during the Civil War. • Explore Lincoln's role in creating a single, unified nation. • Explore creation of WV as a political entity, including the post-war court case that separated both Berkeley and Jefferson counties from Virginia (against their residents wishes) for political reasons. • Describe the Battle of Cedar Creek (who, what, when, where, how, etc.). Describe the size and scale of battle. Describe troop movements, skirmishes, and regiments, tactics, regiments and weaponry in the Battle of Cedar Creek and link them to how they provide insight into the overall military strategies, communications, and ultimate outcome of the Civil War. • Describe Union General Phillip Sheridan's dramatic ride back into battle to rally his troops to victory. • Investigate the context and causes – why the Battle of Cedar Creek was critical in the larger context of the war. Establish the context and causes of the battle – – the "burning" of the granary. • Describe how the Lower Shenandoah's natural advantages made it a strategic battleground during the Civil War, with four major campaigns in the valley, culminating in the Union victory at Cedar Creek. • Scrutinize the Union "Total War" policy of conducting widespread "burnings" of barns, and food supplies and other resources throughout the valley.	• Soldier stories (individual stories: DuPont, etc.) • Battle stories (personal) • Military tactics and command • Civilians • Postwar rebuilding after burning and the economic recovery of the area • Jackson's Valley Campaign • Stories of how civilians coped with invading forces (hide in clothing, act crazy, etc.) • Divided loyalties (example in Heater family) • Cooley family at Belle Grove during Union occupation • Southern heritage-regional interest remains • Politics of the creation of West Virginia • The valley's strategic importance to both sides during the CW • Lincoln's resurgence in popularity and landslide re-election in November after three months of steady Union victories: Mobile in August, Atlanta in September, and the Shenandoah Valley in October • War's end within five months after the Confederate defeat at Cedar Creek • Union and Confederate leaders recognized and responded in characteristic ways to the critical importance of the Campaign and Battle of Cedar Creek • Heavy casualties and Union frustrations in the spring and summer of 1864 • Military supremacy of Union Army as Confederate supply lines were cut off • Dwindling strength of the Confederate resistance after loss of the Shenandoah Valley as a food supply • Interpersonal relationships between military leaders • Importance of the valley's resources to the Confederate war effort • Importance of the Valley Pike on the various campaigns that occurred in the valley • Union destruction of food supplies and other resources, including "The Burnings" in 1864 of food supplies throughout the valley • Impact of war on the plantation's agricultural production and profit

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park: Interpretive Theme Matrix "From Backcountry, to Breadbasket, Battlefield, and Beyond"	
Theme #4 Title: Civil War, the Shenandoah Valley, and the Battle of Cedar Creek *(continued)*	
Interpretive Theme Statement: The desperate and dramatic Battle of Cedar Creek established federal control of the Shenandoah Valley, ended military threats to Washington D.C. and denied the valley's rich granary to the Confederate Army; and, combined with the capture of Atlanta, the Battle of Cedar Creek virtually assured the reelection of Abraham Lincoln and ultimately, to Federal victory.	
Concepts & Ideas These are examples of the concepts and ideas that may be explored within each theme. Concepts and ideas are written as objectives.*	**Topics & Stories** Examples of topics and stories that could be included in this theme.*
• Both armies' reliance on the bounty of the countryside to feed their men and horses. • Describe how both sides' military strategies targeting the valley brought hunger and hardship for its civilian population – although for Virginians of African descent, Union victories also brought freedom. Investigate personal, civilian stories of consequences of denial of grain. • Weigh the impacts of the Civil War on civilians and the whole nation. It touched every family in some way. • Describe stories that illustrate that even in the midst of a brutal war, many individuals showed compassion, courage, and civility toward their opponents on and off the battlefield. Explore the physical, mental, and emotional challenges of Civil War soldiers. • Connect and illustrate why the Civil War is relevant today.	• Belle Grove during the Civil War and the Battle of Cedar Creek. Belle Grove captured, occupied, and used as headquarters by Union General Phillip Sheridan (1864) • How Belle Grove inhabitants fared during General Sheridan's residence • Contrast between well-fed, well-equipped Union troops and hungry, ragged Confederates • Various campaigns and battles that occurred in the valley during the war and their impacts • Explore how the power of personality can change outcomes • Confederate General Jubal Early's early morning surprise attack • Domestic hardships of civilians • Documented stories of effects of the war on enslaved residents of the region • Acts of individual compassion among rank and file, as documented in letters, diaries and other contemporary accounts • Death of Confederate General Ramseur • Heroism of Captain Henry DuPont and others awarded the Medal of Honor • Military supremacy of Union Army as Confederate supply lines were cut off • Dwindling strength of the Confederate resistance after loss of the Shenandoah Valley as a food supply • Belle Grove captured, occupied and used as headquarters by Union General Phillip Sheridan; Battle of Cedar Creek fought on Belle Grove lands • The fate of Belle Grove during the war (captured occupied as Union headquarters, wheat burned)

Desired Visitor Experiences

***Visitor Experience**. The NPS and the Key Partners collaborate to tell all stories related to the park's primary interpretive themes wherever appropriate, whether at sites owned by the NPS or the Key Partners. The NPS interprets the larger park landscapes. Battle of Cedar Creek reenactments continue as special events sponsored by some of the Key Partners. The visitor experience is safe and enjoyable; visitors experience a high degree of satisfaction from their trip to the park.*

—Vision for Cedar Creek and Belle Grove *NHP*
General Management Plan

What kind of experiences do visitors expect when they visit a national battlefield and two historic antebellum plantation sites in the scenic Shenandoah Valley? Knowledgeable Civil War enthusiasts may have very specific goals, but most visitors have generic answers: they want to learn about the battles and various military campaigns, explore the area, see the monuments, enjoy the outdoors, or interact with the people in their group. To visitors, having an "experience" at a site refers to what they did – not necessarily what they thought, felt, learned, or took away with them as inspiration for the future.

Interpreters seeking to develop high-quality services and programming understand that visitors' experiences include not only what they find to do on-site, but the things they learn, feel, and take away from their visit. Visitor experience goals describe the desired experiential, intellectual, emotional, and behavioral outcomes resulting from experiences visitors have at the site.

Experiential goals address what we want people to experience as they explore the places and stories associated with the historic park

Intellectual or knowledge goals describe what we want visitors to know about the places, people, and events associated with the site.

Emotional goals refer to what we want visitors to feel about the stories and places they encounter during their visit.

Behavioral goals relate to what we want people to do as a result of being inspired by the places and stories of the park.

The following visitor experience goals should apply, with variations as appropriate, to Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park visitors of all ages and abilities, including those with visual, auditory, mobility, or cognitive impairments.

Experiential Goals

Visitors should have opportunities to:

- Experience the scenic beauties and natural settings of a major Civil War battlefield and historic plantation in the Lower Shenandoah Valley.
- See the historic battlefield at a scale and from a perspective indicating the size and scope of the battle – more than 47,000 soldiers spread over 30 square miles.
- Drive, walk or otherwise explore at close range the sites of critical importance in the tide of the battle.
- See artifacts and perhaps touch reproductions of battle artillery, weaponry, attire, and equipment used by the soldiers in the battle.
- Interact with each other.
- Tour and explore the historic house and grounds of Belle Grove.
- See historic artifacts, furnishings, decorative arts, agricultural tools and instruments used by valley residents – free and enslaved – throughout Belle Grove's history.
- Engage in interactive experiences that evoke the lives and experiences of 18th- and 19th-century Shenandoah Valley residents.

One of the new programs offered by the National Park Service in 2010 was the Battle of Cedar Creek Tour.

Knowledge/Intellectual Goals

Visitors should be intrigued and provoked to:

- Learn about the importance, chronology, leaders, personalities, and political ramifications of the 1864 Valley Campaign and the Battle of Cedar Creek.
- Learn about the root causes, participants, and results of the U.S. Civil War.
- Learn about the history and geology of the northern (Lower) Shenandoah Valley.
- Test their knowledge about the different groups of people who lived and continue to live in the Lower Shenandoah Valley.
- Analyze and compare and contrast early, colonial, and antebellum culture from multiple perspectives as exemplified by the people who lived at Belle Grove Plantation and elsewhere within the current park boundary.

Emotional Goals

Visitors should be inspired to:

- Feel awe over the scenic beauty, sweeping mountain views, and abundant natural resources that make up the Northern Shenandoah Valley.
- Wonder at the hard work and pride of place experienced by early pioneer settlers of the valley amid their efforts to establish themselves in the wilderness of the country's first frontier.
- Imagine the vibrant 18th- and 19th-century communities of Strasburg and Middletown, the farms and plantation communities, as a beehive of activity.
- Feel emotions such as sorrow, anger, fear, and awe as they imagine the human suffering, fears, and bravery on this ground in 1864.
- Imagine themselves as a participant in the Battle of Cedar Creek or as a resident – enslaved or free, rich or poor, male or female – in the Shenandoah Valley at the time.

- Understand the lives and motivations of the people whose struggles in the Civil War ultimately led to the strong nation we are today.
- Appreciate the architectural harmony of design at Belle Grove Manor House.
- Admire the craftsmanship of Belle Grove and its furnishings.

Behavioral Goals

Visitors should be inspired to:

- Learn from our nation's fierce 19th-century struggle and the sacrifices that were made to preserve the union, and seek to understand how those tensions and struggles remain relevant today as we confront contemporary issues.
- Become stewards of these historic sites and others like them in their own regions.
- Make repeat visits to this park with friends and family for a variety of reasons, from heritage tourism to recreation.
- Explore other parks and battlefields in the future.

Belle Grove Plantation Manor House

Visitor Data

Cedar Creek and Belle Gove NHP will be working to establish how the park will count visitors and report National Park Service public use statistics. Collecting reliable data will present challenges because of the configuration of the park with multiple entrances, no single central visitor center, and visitors traveling roads throughout the park and visiting landmarks without any personal contact with visitor services offered by any of the park partners.

In the meanwhile, the 2008 GMP estimates visitation at 35,000 to 50,000 people annually. The Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP Transportation Synthesis report (May 2006) identified categories of Civil War enthusiasts, visitors with other historic interests; National Park and National Historic Trust Property devotees, recreational users (primarily local), educational groups (including school groups), and "curious" or spontaneous visitors. The Shenandoah Valley National Historic District Interpretive Plan identifies that the predominant types of visitors in the lower valley are heritage travelers, Civil War enthusiasts, families, friends and families with out-of-town guests, group tours, and school-aged students.

Other Planning Considerations

A variety of planning efforts undertaken by other organizations, including local governments, may affect interpretive efforts by the NPS and its partners at Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP. These plans fall into two categories: long-range comprehensive plans by counties and municipalities focused primarily on managing economic development and growth, and plans specifically focused on interpretation and/or marketing of regional resources for visitors.

The park's Community Partners (three counties and two towns) all have long-range comprehensive plans that recognize the need for resource protection in the vicinity of the park. Some elements of these plans may also offer collaborative opportunities for interpretation:

- The Town of Middletown Comprehensive Plan envisions a walking/biking trail system in the town, a historic trail from the town to the park, and a scenic byway designation for local roads.
- The Shenandoah Valley Comprehensive Plan proposes identifying scenic vistas and erecting roadside markers.
- The Town of Strasburg Comprehensive Plan promotes "preservation and development of historically significant areas and buildings and quality tourist attractions such as museums."
- The Old Valley Pike Corridor Plan proposes connecting towns and tourism sites via a multi-use trail system.
- The state's Virginia Outdoors Plan proposes a greenway along the Shenandoah River to connect the park to other resources, as well as water trails along the river and Cedar Creek, a bike/pedestrian plan (Walking and Wheeling the Northern Shenandoah Valley), and scenic byway designation for Route 11.
- The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, which is tasked with preserving and interpreting the valley's Civil War battlefields and related resources, is currently planning the construction of a historic/recreation trail that will eventually connect the Fisher's Hill battlefield, south of Strasburg, to the park.

Other plans have a more direct impact on interpretation of the park's resources.

- The Shenandoah County Keister Tract Plan describes proposed recreational uses of this undeveloped, currently inaccessible corner of the park.
- The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District Interpretive Plan, completed in 2008, addresses the district's resources through three primary themes: The Shenandoah Valley – Stories of its Places and People; The Campaigns – Strategies and Personalities; and The Battlefields - Parts of the Whole. The plan provides baseline recommendations for interpretation at all battlefields in the district, including pre-trip and post-trip battlefield information, interpretive publications, driving tours, walking tours, landscapes, and exhibits.
- Both the National Park Service and the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War are planning events to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the Civil War in Virginia (2011-2015). The Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation Commission is coordinating the effort in the valley, and NPS staff is coordinating valley activities with NPS efforts nationwide.

Existing Conditions

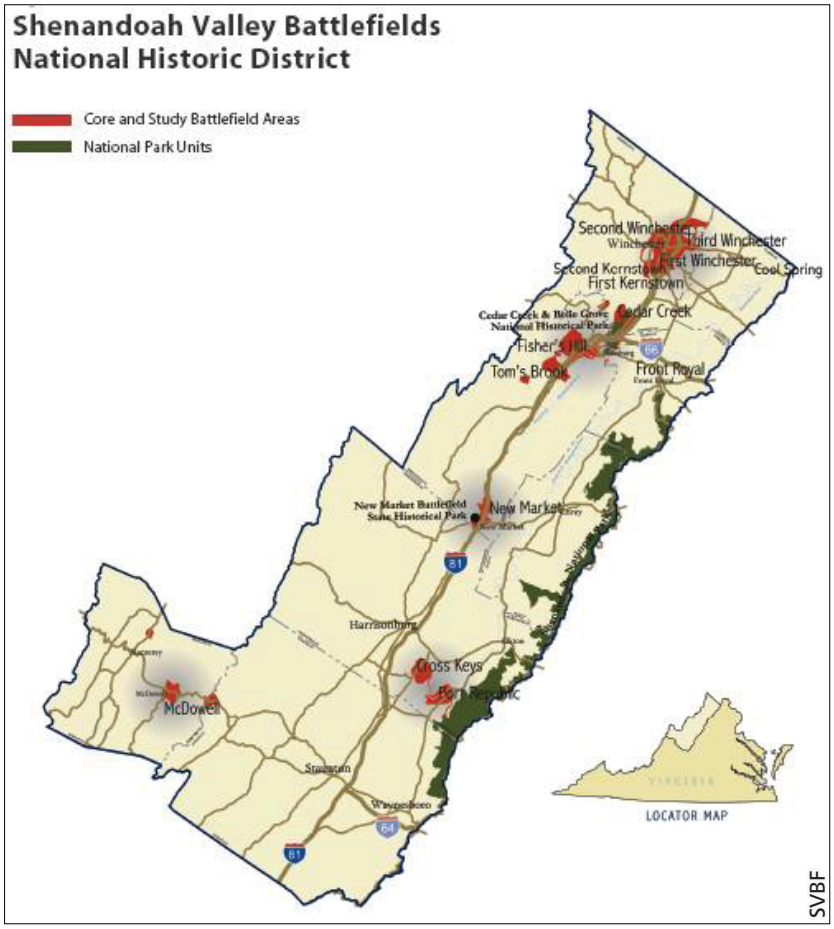
Pre-Visit and Arrival

Pre-visit information and interpretive material is available on the park website (www.nps.gov/cebe) as well as on partner websites. However, an informal survey of park identity in regional and local media and tourism publications indicates that Belle Grove and the Cedar Creek Battlefield frequently appear with no mention of their status as part of a national park.

Because there is no single entrance, park land is not contiguous, and has various and private landowners, there is no "sense of arrival" that visitors might expect when approaching a significant landmark that changed our nation's history. A forthcoming wayfinding signage initiative through the Harpers Ferry Center, an NPS visitor contact center, and branding cooperation among the partners should improve the arrival experience.

Sites and Facilities for Interpretation

As noted previously, the primary sites and facilities for interpretation within Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP include several hundred acres of historic battlefield land preserved and protected by the six key partners; a small headquarters contact center operated by the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation (CCBF); and the Belle Grove Plantation, outbuildings, and grounds. At this point the battlefield landscapes offer varying degrees of accessibility and are best seen by self-guided auto tour and guided tour.



The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Historic District.

Interpretative Offerings

National Park Service

The park initiated ranger-led interpretive tours in June 2010, and ran a pilot daily schedule through August 21. Programs were offered on weekends through October. Of the 142 programs scheduled, 80% attracted an audience, with an average of about 6 visitors per program.

The 2010 season schedule included the following programs:

- Cedar Creek and Belle Grove "in a Box" Park Overview – One-hour orientation on the history and settlement of the Shenandoah Valley, the Battle of Cedar Creek and the impact of the Civil War on the local community. Offered daily at 2:00 p.m. on the grounds of Belle Grove.
- "From Back Country to Breadbasket:" the Peopling of the Shenandoah Valley – One-hour overview covering the history of the Shenandoah Valley from its origins to the eve of the Civil War. Offered periodically on the grounds of Belle Grove.
- "To the Battlefield and Beyond:" War Comes to the Shenandoah Valley – One-hour program examining the many military campaigns and battles in the valley and their effect on local communities. Offered periodically at the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation Headquarters.
- Battle of Cedar Creek Tour – Two-hour, 13-mile guided tour by car-caravan (visitors follow the ranger's vehicle), covering the Battle of Cedar Creek in a chronological fashion, with major events of the fighting and includes 6 stops at key landmarks. Tours begin at the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation Headquarters.
- A 40-minute Podcast Tour describing the Battle of Cedar Creek is available for download from the website for Civil War Traveler. This 18-mile, ten-stop tour covers the battle in chronological order and offers a real-time interpretation of the battlefield.

A starter unigrid brochure describes the park and its partners, park organization, and publicly accessible sites.

Additional interpretive pieces are in progress for the 2011 season.

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

The foundation, manager of the historic district, operates a comprehensive website, "Shenandoah at War," at www.shenadoahatwar.org. A print brochure, also called "Shenandoah at War," provides an overview and map of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District and describes the valley campaigns in the context of the broader theaters of the war.

Belle Grove, Inc.

Belle Grove offers a volunteer-led house tour that interprets the lives of the Hite family and other residents of the plantation (including the slaves) from the Revolutionary War through the Federalist Period and beyond, including the house architecture and restoration, farming and household activities from the antebellum period to Reconstruction, the Civil War's impact on the estate, and details on house furnishings and antiques.

A printed brochure and map, "Belle Grove Plantation: A Self-Guided Tour of the Historic Landscape," offers detailed interpretation of ten exterior sites on the Belle Grove grounds.

A National Trust for Historic Preservation cardstock flyer provides basic information on Belle Grove.

Belle Grove also offers educational programs keyed to Virginia and West Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs), a fee-based children's camp in the summer, a GardenFest featuring master gardeners and historic agriculture portrayals with interactive living history dramatizations, Civil War Commemoration Weekend, annual special exhibitions, lectures an Antiques Appraisal Fair and other special programming. The site also hosts a number of events, such as the 2010 National Final Sheep Dog Trials, private parties, and weddings, that capitalize on the historic estate's agricultural legacy and scenic beauty for fundraising and are essential to support the National Trust's and Belle Grove Inc.'s mission of stewardship, education and historic preservation.

Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation

The CCBF sponsors a large, fee-only annual reenactment of the Battle of Cedar Creek on the portion of the historic battleground that the foundation owns. While reenactors engage with the public and offer living history interpretation at some special events associated with the annual reenactment, the reenactment itself is open to pre-registered, ticketed participants (reenactors) and to the general public as spectators. Local historians provide narrated interpretation of the battle action, with the narration broadcast simultaneously on loud speakers and local radio as the reenactment occurs. Events surrounding the reenactment also include a series of lectures on the Civil War and the context of the battle. The event typically draws some 4,000 to 7,000 participants a year and raises most of CCBF's annual operating budget.

The CCBF's Cedar Creek Kids' Camp ($25 per child) is a one-day, once-a-year event on an autumn Saturday that invites children ages 7 to 14 to "spend the day with infantry, cavalry, and artillery reenactors" (CCBF volunteers) and learn about camp and military life during the Civil War.

A CCBF color brochure, "Cedar Creek Battlefield, Middletown, Virginia," describes the battle, the annual living history weekend, and the CCBF (including a membership/donation form).

A 45-minute video describing the battle is viewable on a TV monitor in CCBF visitor contact station.

Soldier drill, Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation reenactment

Partnerships

An Exemplary Partnership. The park functions as a cohesive whole. The NPS and the Key Partners make management decisions based on a shared understanding of desired resource conditions and visitor experiences in the park. The Community Partners encourage conservation of resources within and in proximity to the park. Private landowners are stewards of the park's resources. The needs of private landowners are addressed in park management decisions. A nonprofit "friends group" – established to assist with accomplishing the park's mission – helps the NPS in various ways, such as by providing volunteer services, assisting with resource management, conducting fundraising efforts, and publicizing important issues.

–Vision for Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP in 15 to 20 years General Management Plan

The NPS and five Key Partners own and operate the properties within the park for the benefit of the public. Approximately $1.6 million in NPS funding has been used by the Key Partners to acquire lands within the park's authorized boundaries.

Following are the Key Partners and their roles as defined in the park's founding legislation.

The annual Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation reenactment attempts to recreate the chaos of battle.

National Park Service

In 2010, the NPS owned approximately 70 acres within the park's authorized boundaries, provides administrative oversight and management for the park, and initiated limited interpretive programming in summer 2010. The park's enabling legislation authorizes the NPS to conduct activities that encourage conservation of the historic and natural resources, provide technical and financial assistance in preserving historic structures, maintaining natural or cultural landscapes, and providing local preservation planning, interpretation, and management of park visitation. This legislation also calls for the NPS to purchase more park land, on a willing seller basis.

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation was created in 2000 by Congress to preserve, protect, interpret, and promote the ten Civil War battlefields and related sites in the Shenandoah Valley, including Cedar Creek. As of 2010, the Foundation owned 460.3 acres and holds conservation easements on 72 acres within the park boundary. These properties are currently in agricultural use and are not open to the public. The park's enabling legislation states that the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation *"may continue to administer and manage the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District in partnership with the NPS and in accordance with the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Historic District Management Plan."*

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation also works with Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP on several Civil War-related interpretive initiatives and programs in the state, including the Virginia Civil War Trails Program and the Virginia Sesquicentennial for the American Civil War.

National Trust for Historic Preservation and Belle Grove, Inc.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation owns 283.42 acres that were originally part of the 7,500-acre Belle Grove Plantation and that are in the core area of the Cedar Creek Battlefield. The National Trust acquired Belle Grove Manor House, related buildings, and the adjoining land in 1964 through a bequest from Francis Welles Hunnewell. Since 1972 Belle Grove, Inc., a regional 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, has operated and maintained Belle Grove Plantation through a cooperative lease with the National Trust. Belle Grove, Inc., owns 104.11 acres within the park, including property on which lies the Belle Grove overseer's cottage, a tract along Water Plant Road on the east side of Route 11, and property near Strasburg, including Bowman's Fort (Harmony Hall) and surrounding property along Fort Bowman Road.

Belle Grove, Inc. and the National Trust for Historic Preservation are currently planning adaptive use of the 1918 barn at Belle Grove as a visitor Welcome Center, to include interpretive exhibits and program/event space and visitor restrooms. The circa 1790 farm office/overseer's cottage is also being considered for renovation and adapted for visitor and interpretative uses.

The Cedar Creek and Belle Grove Plantation NHP enabling legislation states that the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Belle Grove, Inc., may continue to own, operate, and manage Belle Grove Plantation and its structures and grounds within the park boundary. Belle Grove may continue to own the house and grounds at Bowman's Fort (Harmony Hall) for the purpose of permanent preservation, with a long-term goal of opening the property to the public.

Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation

Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation (CCBF) owns approximately 308.59 acres within the park. The Foundation's landholdings include core area battlefield surrounding the historic Heater House, land along Cedar Creek where the remains of the Federal XIX Corps Earthworks are located, and a parcel on the east side of Valley Pike (Route 11) where the Foundation operates a visitor contact facility with administrative offices. These properties are used in part for the annual Battle of Cedar Creek reenactment hosted by the Foundation. The park's enabling legislation states that the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation may continue to own, operate, and manage the lands acquired by the Foundation within the park, continue to conduct reenactments and other events within the park, and transfer ownership interest in portions of their land to the NPS by donation, sale, or other means that meet the legal requirements of NPS land acquisitions.

Future plans call for the Foundation to move its administrative offices to Hupp's Hill Civil War Park (formerly the Stonewall Jackson Museum), located at 33229 Old Valley Pike (U.S. Route 11) just south of Cedar Creek and north of Strasburg. This location will also contain a small museum which will interpret the 1864 Valley Campaign. The current Foundation Headquarters building on Valley Pike will remain staffed and serve as a small visitor contact station.

Shenandoah County

Shenandoah County owns 151 acres (the Keister Tract) on the North Fork of the Shenandoah River at the southern end of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP. The county acquired the land as a passive recreation area that could provide access to the North Fork of the Shenandoah River. The site is currently not open to the public. The Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP enabling legislation states that Shenandoah County "may continue to own, operate, and manage the Keister park site for the benefit of the public."

Community Partners

The park's community partners include the adjacent historic Virginia towns of Strasburg and Middletown as well as Frederick, Shenandoah, and Warren counties. The enabling legislation states that the NPS and its community partners "will cooperate in furthering the purposes of the park."

Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation holdings include the historic Heater House and surrounding fields.

Issues, Influences, and Interpretive Challenges

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historic Park is working toward creating a model for mutually beneficial collaboration between the National Park Service and partners engaged in protecting significant sites. In the few years since its founding, the park has made steady progress.

The tasks ahead are formidable. The challenges range from the physical (buildings, boundaries, and tour routes) to the historical (pre-colonial to post-Civil War) to the philosophical and political (how should we interpret the extraordinary, far-reaching, multi-faceted U.S. Civil War for a diverse and demanding 21st-century audience?). Furthermore, the park's Key Partners reflect significant differences in their conceptions of what the park should be. Each partner organization, including the NPS, has its own vision, mission, governance, performance and operational standards, budget priorities, and membership or constituency.

The 128th New York monument

The extraordinary challenges of preserving and interpreting the Civil War in contemporary society are discussed at length in the NPS document "Holding the High Ground: Principles and Strategies for Managing and Interpreting Civil War Battlefield Landscapes," the published proceedings of Conference of Battlefield Managers held in Nashville, TN, in August of 1998. Each of the four major issues under discussion – summarized as Roads, Adjacent Land Use, Interpreting Civil War battlefields, and Managing and Interpreting Layers of Resources – resonates deeply in the struggles and challenges faced by Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. These issues remain overwhelmingly relevant today and provide a framework for the following discussion.

The Valley versus the War

As its dual name indicates, Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park has a broad identity spanning at least two major aspects of Shenandoah Valley history: (1) the Civil War, and (2) the valley's agricultural and cultural heritage. However, because early discussions centered primarily on preserving the Cedar Creek Battlefield, the park is often perceived exclusively as a Civil War battlefield park. One of the fundamental challenges of interpretation to be addressed in this Interpretive Plan is the task of showcasing the park – both to travelers and to local supporters – as a broad historical venue revealing many different aspects of Shenandoah Valley history and culture, including the cataclysmic upheaval of the Civil War. Providing visitors with an integrated, multi-faceted NPS-quality experience – whether they initially come for a historic house tour, a nature walk, or a Civil War reenactment – will be critical to the long-range success of this park.

Valley Agriculture

Part of the park's dual identity centers on Belle Grove Plantation and its unique history as a 7,500-acre wheat-growing operation with more than 100 laborers held as slaves. Yet large-scale slave-based plantation agriculture was atypical of the Shenandoah Valley, predominantly a region of small farmers (as typified by the historic Heater House). In interpreting the agricultural past of Belle Grove, the interpretive program must take care to present an accurate story of this plantation, including its legacy of slavery, but also place its history and commercial viability in the context of the Valley as a whole.

Slavery

The ultimate legacies of slavery are an inseparable part of the story of the U.S. Civil War – and one unit of the park, Belle Grove Plantation, could not have existed and operated as it did without a large slave population. The enslaved people of Belle Grove constituted a distinctive part of the plantation's life, livelihood, personality, and talents. They were instrumental in building the manor house and presumably, other plantation structures as well.

A thorough, thoughtful interpretation of Belle Grove must address its existence and symbolism as an iconic Southern slave-holding property during the Civil War, as well as its atypical role in the Valley's agricultural and economic life.

The Park's Role in the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Heritage Area

According to its founding legislation, Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park is mandated to serve as the "focal point" of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District. The district, a large National Heritage Area created in 1996 and still evolving, encompasses 15 Civil War battlefields and more than 320 sites scattered among the towns and farms of eight Shenandoah Valley counties (Augusta, Clarke, Frederick, Highland, Page, Rockingham, Shenandoah, and Warren). As the only national park within the heritage area, Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP is envisioned as a major entrance and information nexus for visitors seeking to explore Civil War history in the Valley. With Civil War Sesquicentennial events and tourism already underway, the park can expect increasing attention and visitation in 2011 and beyond.

The park's designated role within an established National Heritage Area raises a question: How can its interpretive program best inform and engage visitors in the larger context of the eight-county heritage area – while also providing optimum programming and interpretation of the park itself?

Holding the High Ground: Interpreting the U.S. Civil War

NPS policies regarding interpretation encourage interpretive programs that strive for inclusiveness, diversity, and differing perspectives on our shared past. Yet few aspects of American history inspire more divisiveness than the "true" meanings, causes, and results of the U.S. Civil War.

According to the published proceedings of "Holding the High Ground" conference in 1998, the foremost problem with current interpretation of Civil War battlefields is

> the inclination to tell the story of the literate, the enfranchised, or the landed – those whose thought and actions are generally recorded in the historical record… We have invested our interpretive and research dollars where it's easiest and most convenient… The result: interpretation that is biased racially and socio-economically.

> We have replaced the reminiscences of returning veterans with the interpretation stressing military tactics and strategy they so loved. In doing so, we have forgotten that the audience of the veterans knew the context of the war. We often do not provide adequate context for the site-related stories we tell.

The report recommends that Civil War parks work diligently to establish interpretive programs that make the war relevant to today's diverse audiences, interpreting not only battle tactics, but also the social, economic, and cultural issues and the breadth of human experience during wartime.

Such a task will not be easy. In "The Dilemmas of Interpretation," published in 2001's *Rally on the High Ground*, a follow-up to the 1998 conference, author Edward T. Linenthal points out that battleground commemorations remain a flashpoint in the national conversation for many Americans:

> These battle sites are more than ceremonial centers…. They are also civic spaces where Americans of various ideological persuasions come to compete for the ownership of powerful national stories and to argue about the nature of heroism, the meaning of war, the efficacy of martial sacrifice, and the significance of preserving the patriotic landscape of the nation.

As the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP grows more popular and reaches a wider audience, the NPS interpretive team will be challenged to set a high, nationally recognized standard that confronts and masters the "dilemmas of interpretation" for this complex, multi-faceted park.

Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation sponsors an annual reenactment of the battle every October.

Encouraging Diversity in Visitorship

The park and its Key Partners would like to attract visitors from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, including African Americans. However, although there is an important African American story at the park, especially at Belle Grove, the park's location in a former Confederate state and its overt display of Confederate symbols (the Confederate flag, monuments, etc.) can be upsetting for some African Americans. As an example, although Belle Grove has an important story to tell concerning African Americans (and its staff has made significant strides in expanding research into this subject and offering a balanced interpretation of slavery at the site), Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP as a whole does not have the same compelling draw for African Americans visitors as other NPS sites in Virginia such as the Booker T. Washington National Monument or Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site. This concern is both a marketing and an interpretive problem, yet one that can be partially addressed by interpretive outreach tools such as the web.

Once ethnically diverse visitors make the decision to investigate, how can this national historical park overturn negative perceptions and be welcoming for people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives on the Civil War? Are there ways that interpretive programming can reach out to visitors or prospective visitors who feel uneasy about seeing their tax dollars go to commemorate so divisive an issue in historical (and contemporary) American life?

Resource Protection

Due to the continued efforts of local residents and supporters, the irreplaceable historic resources of Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove manor house and grounds are protected from future residential, commercial, or industrial development. Yet sustainable resource protection remains a concern. For example:

- Frederick, Shenandoah, and Warren counties have grown rapidly in recent years and are now considered to be within the Washington, D.C., commuting area. Agricultural land uses have declined while conversion of land to commercial and residential uses is on the rise.
- Interstate 81 has bisected the historic battlefield since the early 1960s, but it will likely be widened within the coming decade. A joint federal/state Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FHWA 2007a) identifies a need for two additional lanes on both the northbound and southbound I-81 roadways through the park (mileposts 299 to 301) to expand the roadway's capacity through the year 2035. Though the amount of land to be taken from the park has not been determined, some 325 to 436 acres within the park boundary would be affected, further diminishing the battlefield and degrading visitors' views of battle sites and opportunities for quiet contemplation. As of fall 2010, the first Tier 2 study of I-81 needs in Virginia addresses only the I-77/I-81 junction near Wytheville, some 200 miles southwest of the park.
- Other threats to the historic resources of the park include expansion of a limestone quarry located immediately west of the park boundary, which will destroy over 400 acres of core battlefield land, and a major power transmission line proposed for construction within the park's view shed.

Fortunately, even though there are numerous tracts of land with vacant houses now owned by the partners, vandalism in the park has been minimal. Illegal relic hunting, however, continues to pose a problem for the NPS and its partners, as the park has no law enforcement staff to provide the necessary protection to the resources. Such activity causes irreparable damage to the park's cultural resources.

Public Access Issues and Private Property Rights

As the park is currently configured, there is little sense of "arrival" at the park, and visitors find it difficult to grasp a "sense of place" about the park and its holdings.

One reason for the difficulty is that visitors often have a hard time distinguishing between property owned by the NPS and Key Partners, and private property owned by other landholders within the park. This confusion can sometimes lead visitor to intrude upon private property in their attempts to park their vehicles and walk or drive to see parts of the battlefield. Other issues include lack of clear signage, differing development stages by different partners (some are not operable yet), and widely varying terms of ownership and/or management, from conservation easements to long-term leases.

To date, property owners within the park have been very tolerant and hospitable to visitors. However, as the park becomes more popular and visitation increases, private property owners may become more concerned about intrusions on their personal privacy, potential conflicts regarding usage such as artifact hunting or roaming pets, roadway and roadside damage from larger tour vehicles, and similar issues.

Future acquisition of private property within the park's designated boundaries depends on willing sellers, as well as adequate funding.

Key Partner Land Use Policies

All of the park's Key Partners are also private owners, albeit organizational ones with Belle Grove, Inc., and the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation offering some public access to the properties. Regardless of NPS guidelines, these entities will continue to exercise their right to use their assets/resources as they see fit to generate revenue in a crowded public/private marketplace. Both entities currently generate revenue from a combination of visitor fees, retail sales, facilities rentals, special events, individual donations, and corporate, foundation, and governmental grants.

Money and Expectations

Contrary to many people's opinions and expectations, designation as a National Trust property, a National Historic Landmark, historic district, or even a National Park Service-affiliated site does not automatically bring funding or resource protection. At present, all the partners in Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP struggle for adequate funding for daily operations, maintenance, and enhanced visitor services and interpretation.

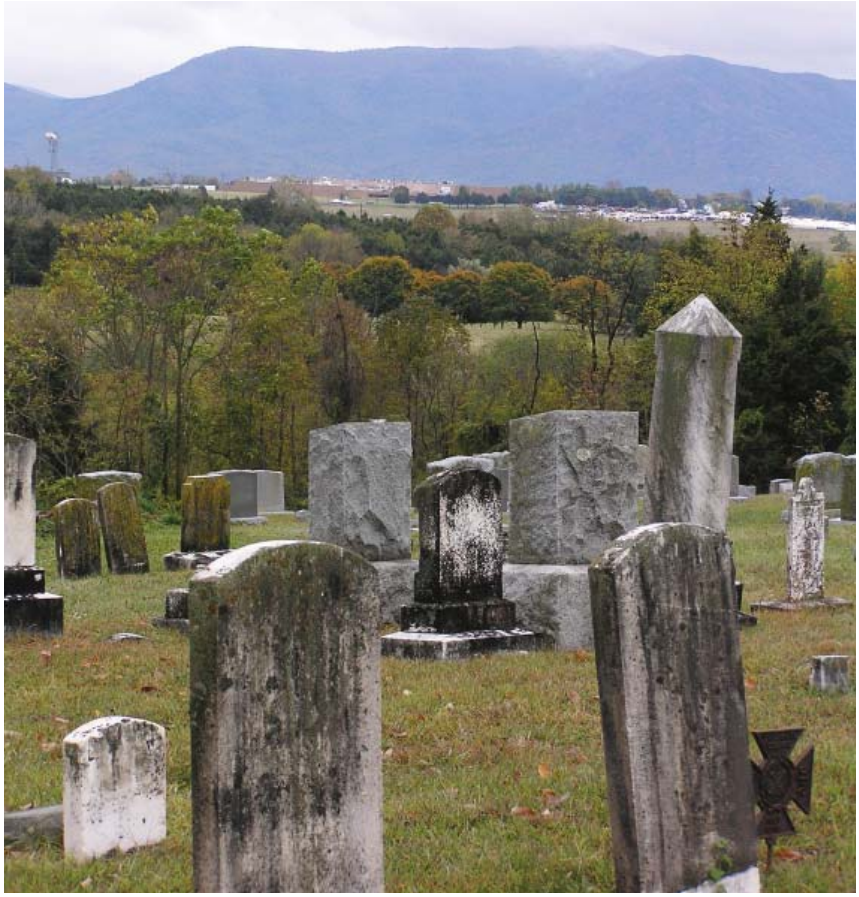
Infrastructure for the park is in the beginning stages as well. Among the infrastructure needs identified by park supporters are consistent and well-designed/branded wayfinding signs, a permanent visitor center or interpretive facility with adequate visitor services (including restrooms, a bookstore, and gathering place for groups and tours), designated walking trails or marked driving routes, county road upgrades, and a parkwide wayside exhibit plan to help update and enhance the park's existing wayside interpretation currently provided by the CCBF.

Recommendations

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park is still in development, with significant land acquisition, resource protection, facilities, and other elements yet to come. Nonetheless, a number of recommendations for building an effective NPS interpretive program – and complementing and enhancing Key Partners' interpretive programs – can and should go forward now.

Collaborating with Key Partners, the NPS team should seek to develop a well-documented, multi-faceted baseline interpretive program that will provide an integrated visitor experience, no matter how or where visitors arrive at the park.

Working with NPS staff, Key Partners, and other stakeholders, the Interpretive Planning team recommends this blueprint for strengthening the interpretive program over the next three years.



Middletown (Mount Olive) Cemetery

Parkwide Recommendations

Parkwide Recommendation #1: Equip an Interim Visitor Contact Station

as an interpretive center to serve visitors and Key Partners as the primary orientation center or starting point for year-round visitors to the park. Such a facility can provide visitors, local residents, educational groups, and Key Partners with a critical focal point in the park until a permanent visitor center is built.

Since a permanent visitor center may be a decade or more in the future, the interim visitor contact station should be well-planned to accommodate the park's needs for five to ten years – a period that encompasses not only the Civil War Sesquicentennial, but also the Centennial Year of the creation of the National Park Service.

With assistance from the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP Federal Advisory Committee, Key Partners, and other stakeholders, the park planning team makes the following recommendations for interpretive services at the Interim Visitor Contact Station.

The Interim Visitor Contact Station
In developing plans for the interim facility, it is helpful to keep in mind the pivotal role envisioned for a future full-service NPS visitor center, as called for in the park's General Management Plan:

> [T]he park's cultural heritage and natural history stories would be told at a central location with a unified message. This central hub would orient visitors to the park, the operations of the NPS and the Key Partners, and the National Historic district; this hub would support educational programs, research, and other activities that help the park realize its special mandates for

resource conservation. Focal areas within protected cultural landscapes elsewhere in the park would provide immersion experiences where stories would be told in more depth.

Similarly, the Interpretive Plan for the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District, of which the park and its partners are a part, recommends an orientation center within each designated region or "cluster" in the historic district. The plan recommends the future visitor center of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP as a good possibility for such an orientation center within the district's Signal Knob cluster.

The NPS remains committed to creating a full-service visitor center for the park in the future, but a suitable facility and property that meets all essential criteria for a visitor center has yet to be identified. (As detailed in the GMP, p. 2-43, the Bowman-Hite Farm, owned by NPS, has been considered but fails to meet several essential criteria.)

In the meantime, the proposed Interim Visitor Contact Station (IVCS) should function as closely as possible to the GMP vision for a full-service center. These elements are recommended:

Exterior Information/Orientation Kiosk

A three-unit informational kiosk with a brochure rack could be located outside the building to provide visitors with 24-hour access to mapping/orientation information, current programs, and an overview of the park. The panels used in this kiosk could be duplicated for use at several other key locations or entryways throughout the park.

Exterior Interpretive and/or Gathering Space

Ideally, the IVCS will have a small but safe and universally accessible outdoor area for interpretive use, both for logistics (i.e., assembling and starting a tour) and for content (living history or wildlife/nature presentations, hands-on educational activities, and similar activities better done outdoors). This space could be a small amphitheater or an outdoor classroom, as well as a gathering place for tours or talks.

One of the earliest settlement sites within the park was Long Meadow.

Staffed Reception/Information Area

A key element of the IVCS should be a staffed reception desk with a volunteer or staff member on hand to welcome visitors, answer questions, and provide hand-outs and guidance about maximizing visitor experience in the park. This plan recommends that the reception desk be staffed primarily by volunteers from a rotating cross-section of park, community, and Key Partner supporters.

For periods when staffing and visitation are extremely low and the retail area is closed, such as off-season in mid-winter, a high-quality, motion-triggered talking-head video – perhaps featuring the park superintendent or chief of interpretation – could welcome visitors and direct them to self-serve; a simple buzzer or phone system could summon a park representative.

- A **Master Calendar** with information about all current events from all Key Partners throughout the park should be readily available at the contact center reception desk. This Master Calendar may take various forms, including consistently branded paper postings, flyers or handouts, web access at a computer station for visitor use, smart phone download, and possibly a digital screen at the reception desk.
    - The contact station should also explore using its "comfort stations" (restrooms) as information stations highlighting park events for residents and/or recreational users who may use these facilities daily but seldom enter the main building space.
- **Park publications**, including interpretive brochures from the NPS and all Key Partners, should be readily available at the contact center reception area. Over time, these publications should evolve into a complementary, cohesive brand or look that clearly delineates each Key Partner and its unique niche as a prominent part of the national park. [For further discussion of recommended NPS publications, see p. 41.]

Audiovisual Presentations

The contact station should offer visitors a place to see a brief overview film about the park and its stories. In a small space, this viewing area may be a comfortable lounge/seating area of a half-dozen seats clustered before a large television screen with a DVD player. If desired, the park can run a primary overview film (maximum length about 15 minutes) and several shorter, more focused topical films on a rotating schedule, depending on visitor interests and demand. [For more detailed recommendations on audiovisual media as part of a parkwide interpretive program, see p. 42.]

Mapping and Interpretive Exhibits

The first exhibit for the Interim Visitor Contact Station is a large, interactive, table-height fiber-optic map showing the entire park. This exciting orientation tool will greatly assist visitors in understanding the Battle of Cedar Creek and orienting themselves within its geographical boundaries.

- To maximize the map's interpretive value, it should be surrounded and supported by attractive, graphics-based reader rails and vertical interpretive panels that provide a user-friendly overview of the park based on its interpretive themes. For example, color-coded or icon-marked reader rails (with audio wands if desired) could provide brief interpretation about key sites, while one large vertical panel might highlight the park as a whole (listing all the partners). Subsequent panels could address and illustrate each of the five interpretive themes in the themes matrix (see p. 6) using scenes and stories from Key Partner sites. For visitors, this approach would provide a brief "Park in

a Box" summation, from which they could then follow their own interests as they choose areas for further exploration.

- With minimal additional expense or space, the graphic panels could incorporate simple interactivity, such as sliding panels to show "then and now" landscapes, rotating tumblers requiring visitors to match or sequence critical troop movements across a field of battle, audio wands, digital slide show inserts, or tactile elements such as touchable limestone bricks like those made by enslaved residents at Belle Grove.

Precise allocations of exhibit space cannot be determined until the location and dimensions of the contact center are known. It is likely that exhibit space in this interim facility (including room for the fiber-optic map) will be quite small. However, to ensure the best use of this limited space and the creation of reliable, affordable, high-quality exhibits, this plan strongly recommends that the park seek guidance from a professional exhibit designer. (In general, the design-build cost of visitor center exhibits can range from $250 to $500 and up per square foot of installed exhibit footprint; the higher cost range reflects increased use of technology and complex interactives.)

Tours and Suggested Itineraries

The interim visitor contact station should serve as a central location for publicizing all park tours, as well as for starting and ending parkwide tours and specialized time- or interest-based itineraries for visitors with special interests or needs. Tours may be escorted or self-guided driving tours or (possibly) walking tours.

Park tours leaving from the visitor contact station should offer visitors a range of choices. For example:

- A "master tour" of the park should incorporate time for visitors to take the house tour at Belle Grove Plantation.
- A specialty itinerary could focus on battle tactics, enabling visitors to see the battlefield from various vantage points, and then incorporate time for visitation at the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation Headquarters within the park or the Foundation's 2011 visitor facility and museum at nearby Hupp's Hill Civil War Park.

Special Presentations

Depending on the space available (interior or exterior), the visitor contact center could host a limited schedule of special presentations such as ranger talks, guest lecturers, small-scale living history portrayals or wildlife demonstrations.

- When the Junior Ranger program is developed (see p. 38), Junior Ranger activities may be conducted at the interim visitor contact station.

Sales Items

With sales items chosen via a Scope of Sales agreement – and with care not to compete with Key Partners' sales – the contact station should provide a limited number of NPS, Civil War, and/or Shenandoah Valley items for purchase.

National Park Service Visitor Services

The visitor contact station should also offer NPS destination visitors the customer service options regularly offered at national parks, such as NPS Passport books and the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP passport stamp.

Parkwide Recommendation #2: Resolve the issue of branding.

The NPS should take the lead in developing a clear, consistent identity package that recognizes and accommodates the Key Partners while establishing branding integrity for Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP as a **national park**. This issue is critical to community and visitor perception, access, and overall experience at and with the park, especially with the Civil War Sesquicentennial already underway. Until the branding issue is resolved, a "sense of place" for the park cannot be successfully achieved, and critically needed wayfinding and interpretive signage should not proceed.

As American businesses remind us constantly in our daily lives, successful, high-impact branding is a long-term, continuous process. Done well, it captivates targeted audiences, sets expectations, and elevates perceptions of branded items' value or intrinsic worth. Despite the difficulties inherent in the process, this plan recommends that a parkwide branding/identity initiative begin immediately.

Year One:
Establish a task force of NPS and Key Partner representatives to discuss branding issues, communicate with their respective organizations, and reach a consensus on what the park's "brand" and overall "look" should be in its signage and publications. For example, the group could reach a consensus on several key issues, such as:

- A preferred color palette for the different Key Partners,
- A tag line or slogan (to be used in a consistent, agreed-upon typeface) that encourages all partners to identify themselves as "A National Park Partner" underneath their own logos – much as Belle Grove Plantation currently uses its affiliation with the National Trust for Historic Preservation on all its publications ("Belle Grove: A National Trust Historic Site").

Partners' current media in 2011 show no affiliation with the national park, even though such an affiliation has existed since 2002. A consistent identifier or slogan could enhance name recognition and directly benefit each of the Key Partners and the park as a whole, without interfering with partners' individual identities.

The team should also initiate and/or follow through with the NPS Harpers Ferry Center unit responsible for wayfinding signage in national parks.

Year Two:
Once the brand/slogan has been identified and the design standards agreed upon, the task force should launch a campaign to get all Key Partners and all local media and tourism entities to use the consistent branding on all future publications, websites, presentations, calendar listings, etc. This effort will take several years to accomplish, as older publications are depleted and as local and regional media adapt to the new identity.

Year Three:
With effective, consistent branding in place, the NPS, park partners, and state and local officials can proceed with much-needed wayfinding, identity, and interpretive signage throughout the park.

Parkwide Recommendation #3: Provide walking access to the park's battlefields and agricultural grounds year-round.

According to the Interpretive Plan for the Shenandoah Valley National Battlefields Historic District,

> Walking tours on publicly accessible battlefields should be at the heart of the interpretive presentation. Visitors should be encouraged to go out into the landscape and see the battlefields first-hand. (SVBNHD IP, p. xvii)

If visitors are to experience the unique offerings of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP fully, they need direct physical access to the landscape on a year-round basis. The NPS and Key Partners should work together to provide walking access on designated areas of the battlefield and agricultural grounds throughout the year. Ideally, this access would be through interpretive trails and designated interpretive pull-off/walking areas that complement and expand self-guided driving tours.

Year One:
Work with Key Partners and Community Partners to identify one or more potential trail routes that support key interpretive messages for the park and that can be developed quickly with minimal expense and disruption (i.e., limited to foot-traffic only). Ideally, these routes will connect to existing or planned trails in nearby communities and will become the first step in a long-range master plan for trails throughout the park in 10 or 15 years.

Year Two:
Begin occasional ranger-led interpretive tours on these routes, perhaps with Key Partner and civic leaders by invitation only, to test suitability and instill interpretive value into trail proposals.

Year Three:
Move forward to meet a goal of enabling park visitors to have "feet on the ground" on one or more interpretive walking trails by 2014, the sesquicentennial year of the Battle of Cedar Creek.

F. Goolrick

Slave cemetery at Belle Grove Plantation

Personal Services

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP launched its first NPS ranger-led talks and tours in 2010 with a staff of one full-time interpreter and two seasonal employees. (Belle Grove Plantation has offered volunteer-led tours for many years.) The 2010 NPS programs were conducted on the grounds of Belle Grove, at the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation Headquarters, and as a car-caravan, ranger-led driving tour.

Of the array of potential interpretive services that might be recommended for this still-developing park, ranger-led interpretive programs currently offer the greatest interpretive impact and the most flexibility – and most importantly, they can be developed and delivered without additional capital investment or disruption at NPS and partner sites throughout the park. Key partners and workshop participants commended the interpretive staff for this approach and recommended that personalized, interpreter-led programs continue to grow and expand.

Personal Services Recommendation #1: Interpreter-led tours

Continue to build a solid program of NPS interpreter-led tours that illuminate the primary themes of the park and stand as best-practices models for Key Partners and other interested parties involved in park interpretation.

Year One:

- Increase frequency of daily programs offered, and publicize these additional offerings widely.
  - Unless the "box" is a relevant artifact, consider re-naming the "In a Box" overview program with a catchier title – perhaps evoking a historical valise, saddlebags, or a knapsack.
- Develop at least one hands-on children's program to enrich the mix of offerings as soon as possible.
  - To supplement this program, prepare a simple handout directing young visitors to the Web Ranger programs on the Civil War (http://www.webrangers.us/activities/civilwar/).

The annual reenactment sponsored by the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation attracts several thousand reenactors and spectators each year.

- Make uniformed interpretive staff and volunteers available to serve as roving rangers delivering pocket programs (four- or five-minute segments drawn from existing programs) during peak visitation periods.
- Explore options to use a passenger van in addition to the current car-caravan escorted driving tour. For example, one option might be for a Key Partner or commercial vendor to rent/provide the van(s) and offer the tour for a small fee, with the NPS ranger available as a step-on guide. This approach might be especially suitable for organized tour groups as the Sesquicentennial approaches.

Year Two:

- Create an NPS Junior Ranger program for the park, with the package available both on-site and on the web.
  - Collaborate with Key Partners to make the NPS Junior Ranger program accessible to youth visiting their sites within the park.
- Offer NPS-quality interpreter training to Key Partner volunteers.
- Consider rotating the starting points for tours among the different Key Partner and Community Partner venues.

Year Three:

- Expand the range of topics for interpretive programs, delving deeper into the many concepts and ideas outlined in the Interpretive Theme Matrix of this plan.
  - For example, a series of short seasonal programs could focus on military leaders, farmers in the valley, women's roles in 18th- and 19th-century Shenandoah, heritage plants, or other topics listed in the Theme Matrix.

Personal Services Recommendation #2: Educational Programming

Develop a parkwide educational curriculum for K-12 visitors, both virtual and on-site.

Year One:

- *Create an educational advisory group* with educators and/or parents from targeted schools to assist in developing practical, usable educational programs for public, private, and home-school.

Year Two:

- *Develop a targeted, grade-level and subject-specific curriculum*, using the park and its stories as a resource, in support of Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) and Common Core State Standards for appropriate grade levels.
  - Important Note: Any new programs developed by the NPS should explore facets of the park that complement and support the popular and successful "Discover Your Past" curriculum developed and delivered for elementary-school children at Belle Grove Plantation.
  - If necessary, explore funding resources to assist schools with affordable transportation to the park.

Year Three:

- Prepare and deliver "traveling trunk" outreach programs at schools in the area.
- Coordinate and host on-site school visits at the park.

Personal Services Recommendation #3: Outreach and Special Programming

Reach out to local residents with special programming and events that emphasize the park's value and connection to its surrounding communities.

Years One – Three:

- Offer special-occasion tours that enable locals to see park progress in action at sites not yet open to the public.
- Support local festivals and events by offering mini-interpretive programs about the park and the National Park Service.
- Continue to present occasional programs at civic clubs, local chamber events to help keep local supporters engaged and aware of park progress.
- Create special interpretive activities for local visitors to inspire greater connections to the park. Examples mentioned by stakeholders include:
    - "Local Teacher Day" or "Local First Responders Day" at the park;
    - Local storytelling programs or tours accompanied/led by community members or family historians

Wayfinding signage offers visitors the stories of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove.

Interpretive Media

The pace of change in communications technology has and will continue to affect how parks think about, develop, and use interpretive media. The next-generation expectations of visitors accustomed to smart phones, instant wireless access, social media, and self-accessed customized information means that future interpretive media can no longer be divided into neat categories of print, audiovisuals, or exhibits. Instead, 21st-century interpretive media should always be designed with an eye toward multiple platforms, diverse audiences, and multiple uses.

As a developing park, Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP has a two-pronged challenge: first, to develop a benchmark level of high-quality interpretive media visitors expect and deserve from a national park; and second, to develop new and creative ways to meet visitors' needs for interpretation during the park's development phase, when physical structures and access to the park landscapes remains relatively limited.

This plan recommends the following priorities for interpretive media over the next three years.

The Keister Tract is owned and managed by the Parks and Recreation Department of Shenandoah County.

Interpretive Media Recommendation #1: Print publications

NPS print publications and complementary Key Partner print publications should be available to visitors at all points where they may access the park. Note: To the extent possible, these publications should reflect the branding consensus achieved by a park/partners task force, as described above.

Year One:

- *Create a new, up-to-date master map* of the park and distribute it widely to all Key Partners, tourism centers, and local media. This map should include its date of preparation, web addresses, and perhaps GPS coordinates for key locations. The map should be available in high-resolution digital format as well as in pdf form for quick emailing, and it should parallel the fiber-optic map on display in the visitor center as well as the map used in the driving tour.
    - Create enlarged map segments for specific areas as needed to support interpretive programs and visitor needs.
- *Create a new NPS unigrid brochure* using the up-to-date master map. The unigrid brochure should be distributed throughout the park and to its Community Partners.
- *Create an NPS park rack card* (two-sided, single thickness, #10 envelope-sized) for wide off-site distribution and publicity at venues such as state and city welcome centers, other parks and tourist attractions, hotels, and interstate stops.
- *Develop a master park flyer/calendar* and a mechanism for capturing calendar entries for use by all Key Partners. Ideally, this media piece will use a consistent template across all partner locations – consistently branded paper postings, flyers or handouts, web postings and smart phone downloads, and digital screens at all partner reception areas – so that all visitors using the calendar or flyers will immediately be able to understand that the event/venue is part of a national park.

Year Two:

- *Launch a small, twice-yearly parkwide newsletter* to communicate with stakeholders and visitors, highlight new interpretative offerings, and present short feature stories about the park, its partners, resources, Sesquicentennial activities, or other news.
    - Distribution may be largely by email or web download, although a limited print run is advisable for distribution at the NPS Visitor Contact Station and Key Partner sites.

Year Three:

- *Plan and develop a series of NPS Site Bulletins* on topics and/or sites that illustrate and provide in-depth interpretation related to the park's primary themes.
    - NPS Site Bulletins, often including illustrations and images of artifacts, are a longstanding NPS tool for providing interested visitors with authoritative, accurate, more extensive details about a park and its resources than can be portrayed in exhibits or programming. Once developed, site bulletins may be printed inexpensively as needed, posted on the website, and distributed at Key Partner venues.

Interpretive Media Recommendation #2: Audiovisuals

NPS professional-quality audiovisual programs should be produced to provide visitors of all abilities and backgrounds with high-quality audiovisual experiences focused on the significance and stories of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP. With planning, the park can produce and/or acquire several additional short videos to complement a primary overview-style film.

Year One:

- *Add images to the existing tour podcast*. With imagery matched to the existing voice track, the existing 45-minute podcast tour of the battlefield becomes a true "virtual tour" of the park. This additional step of adding the visual elements to the tour will greatly expand its appeal and provide informed, engaging interpretation about the park to a much wider audience.
- *Seek funding for a short, engaging overview film* to be used primarily at the NPS Interim Visitor Contact Station, with secondary uses (perhaps with customized inserts) at other Key Partner sites. Other potential uses include DVD distribution to visitor centers and tourism organizations, as well as K-12 schools. Depending on permissions and download constraints, the film could also be placed on the park website.

Years Two – Three:

- *Produce a primary overview film for the park*, working with NPS and other audiovisual professionals and Key Partners.
- *Explore adaptation of battlefield-focused films* for use on a rotating basis in the NPS visitor contact station. For example, the CCBF has produced a 45-minute film about the Battle of Cedar Creek, and the 2009 reenactment is the subject of a documentary by a Virginia filmmaker.
- *Consider the creation or acquisition of additional short films* or digital slide shows – perhaps contributed by volunteers or stakeholders – focusing on other primary themes associated with the park, such as Shenandoah Valley domestic or agricultural life, natural history of the valley, or short features on historical figures.
    - In the digital age, such productions do not have to be elaborate; a simple, natural-sound video loop or PowerPoint/digital slide sequence of a reenactor loading a weapon, a blacksmith shoeing a horse, or a landscape through the seasons can be absorbing and appealing to a wide range of visitors.

Interpretive Media Recommendation #3: Web-based media

Web-based media should be a key component of interpretation for Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP – in the park and beyond.

Years One – Three:

- *Continue to develop and enrich the NPS park website* with lively, up-to-date information and interpretive content.
    - Links to Key Partner sites, as well as other relevant NPS sites (including authorized Civil War and Sesquicentennial sites) will enrich visitors' online experience.
    - The park should survey its web exposure periodically and ask other NPS sites, tourism sites, etc., to be sure to list CEBE on their sites.
- *Continue to develop and/or adapt interpretive materials* for use on the web. As new interpretive programs are developed, consider also developing segments of each as an audiovisual/Power Point that can become a podcast at some future date. Some segments could be produced specifically as "teasers" to promote the opportunity for full tours on-site.
    - Interpretive staff should be encouraged to spend their time and talents developing programs, with the flexibility to seek technical assistance as needed (perhaps from volunteers) in order to adapt materials such as Site Bulletins and Power Point presentations into web-friendly, downloadable materials.

Years Two – Three:

- *Explore social media* such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogging to promote the park and communicate with park stakeholders. In particular, as visitation picks up and more people attend park tours, interpreters should explore using social media as a tool enabling visitors to provide feedback and share their stories about their time at the park, their responses to programs, and their recommendations for additional programs and activities.

The park preserves the agricultural setting of the Shenandoah Valley.

Interpretive Media Recommendation #4: Exterior Exhibits

Exterior entrance signs, wayfinding signs, informational kiosks with maps, and interpretive waysides should be available and accessible at key visitor entrances and tour sites. Although exterior signage for the park is a long-term management matter, a successful sign program is essential to creating a comprehensive interpretive plan for the park. This plan recommends the following short-term solutions:

- *Support the branding taskforce* and its parkwide effort to address the branding/identity and wayfinding signage for the park as soon as possible.
- *Seek funding for a comprehensive trail wayside exhibit plan*. Because the landscapes of the park are at various stages of readiness for public access, this wayside exhibit plan should be created (and funded) in segments over time. However the wayside exhibit plan progresses, it should include the following:
    - Clear hierarchal levels of interpretation (for example, consistent introductory or trailhead kiosks, followed by low-profile waysides with consistent branding and well-developed thematic content);
    - Accommodation for potential interactivity, self-guided tour numbers, and alternate delivery systems such as audio or tactile elements; and
    - Best-practices NPS-quality interpretive writing, graphics, and materials that set a high standard for the park and its Key Partners as future signage is developed.
    - Prompts to the park website "for more information" on all interpretive signs.
- *Create an outdoor interpretive kiosk* as part of the new NPS Visitor Contact Station. [See p. 31.]
- *Choose several key landscapes and sites as pilot sites for the comprehensive wayside exhibit plan*, and ascertain what physical improvements (parking pull-offs, grading, private property access agreements, etc.) will be needed to make the site and its waysides accessible. The proposed foot-traffic only path may be the first option to be feasible, or a decision may be made to place trailhead/overview site signs initially, and wayside interpretive services afterward.
- *Reevaluate existing signs and markers within the park* for wear and tear, placement, and other concerns, and work with Key Partners and others (including the Virginia Civil War Commission) to encourage development of new exterior wayfinding and interpretative exhibits as needed.
    - Ideally, the park should do a thorough inventory of placement, topic, and condition of all interpretive signs, monuments, and historic markers within the park, with a long-range goal of maintaining making these features more accessible.

Interpretive Media Recommendation #5: Interior Exhibits

Plan and install professional-quality interior exhibits in the NPS Interim Visitor Contact Station.

- *Create a small park overview exhibit* around the new fiber-optic map in the contact station. [See p. 33.]
- *Create a one-panel Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District exhibit* for the contact station. Such a display will clearly locate the park and its Key Partners within the heart of this national historic district.
- *Create a portable display* about the park for use at festivals, conferences, and other events.
    - A set of "window-shade" roll-up displays are one inexpensive solution for a professional-looking yet portable exhibit.

Blue Bells along Cedar Creek

Interpretive Media Recommendation #6: An Image Database

Create an image database to support future interpretative media and communications throughout the park.

- *Create an image library* of park-based, high-resolution digital imagery to use in a variety of future interpretive and informational/marketing purposes. Appealing color photographs of park scenes, wildlife, structures, and visitors and staff engaged in activities and events can be used in future brochures, web-based media, exhibits, flyers, and presentations.
    - Signed permission forms are advised if non-staff individuals will be identifiable in photographs.
    - Signed usage agreements are advised for photographs taken by volunteers and non-staff photographers.
    - Careful cataloguing, storage, and identification by name, events, and dates are essential.
    - The park may want to consider purchasing a moderately priced high-resolution SLR digital camera for flexibility and reliability.

Research Needs for Interpretation

Until a permanent NPS visitor center becomes a reality for Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP, park artifacts and archives owned by NPS must be stored at other park units or facilities. However, Key Partners, especially Belle Grove and CCBF, have a significant number of artifacts and period pieces. For interpreters charged with planning and/or advising on the development of interpretive media, it is essential to know what artifacts and archival resources might be available in support of interpretive materials.

Research Recommendation #1:

Research appropriate artifacts and archival materials that may be suitable for print or 3-D reproduction and use in interpretive programs, and determine protocols for obtaining appropriate pieces for visual (photographic) or 3-D reproduction.

Research Recommendation #2:

Seek assistance from Key Partners on sourcing appropriate artifacts and archival materials for interpretive use. For example, if a Key Partner grants permission to the NPS to photograph artifacts, these digital representations can be available for all partners to use in interpretive materials such as wayside signs and exhibits that benefit the entire park.

Research Recommendation #3:

Create a high-quality bibliography of books and monographs relating the park and make the listings available on the park website.

An NPS-hosted team of professional historians, archeologists and other scholars should "vet" the list.

Research Recommendation #4:

Assess the need for additional NPS research documents such as Historic Structures Reports, a Cultural Landscape Report, a Historic Resources Study, and other reports as needed in support of well-sourced and comprehensive interpretive programming at the park.

Staffing Needs

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP interpretive staffing needs will continue to grow as the park develops. Although the park is not expected to gain additional full-time permanent interpretive staff over the next three years, additional staffing (both volunteer and paid) will be needed to assist the park as it prepares for and participates in events surrounding the Civil War Sesquicentennial. The park should explore all options for temporary employees, including seasonal NPS employees, participants in the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program, interns from the Student Training Employment Program (STEP), and other college internship programs.

In addition, the park should actively seek to expand its base of volunteers.

Implementation Guide

This chart prioritizes implementation of the interpretive recommendations for the park, with suggestions for step-by-step progress toward each major recommendation. Indicators (X) identify each recommendation for years one through three. Entries with X across all three years should be considered as continuous, ongoing activities.

The cost projection column is a rough guide for comparing estimated costs of each recommendation. The symbol $ estimates a moderate annual cost (under $50,000); the $$ indicates annual expenditures estimated between $50,000 and $100,000; and the $$$ indicates major capital expenditures such as facilities construction or major remodeling, large exhibit installations, or visitor transportation vehicles.

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historic Park: Priorities by Interpretive Service	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Cost Projection
Parkwide				
Parkwide Recommendation # 1: NPS Interim Visitor Contact Station	X	X	X	$$$
[See Interpretive Media Recommendations for details]				
Parkwide Recommendation # 2: Branding				
Establish a branding task force	X			$
Launch campaign to introduce new branding and design standards for all media		X		$
Proceed with wayfinding, identity, and interpretive signage in park			X	$$
Parkwide Recommendation # 3: Walking access to battlefields and agricultural fields year-round				
Identify one or more potential foot-traffic-only trails	X			$
Begin occasional ranger-led tours of these routes		X		$
Ready at least one interpretive walking trail for regular visitor use by 2014			X	$$
Personal Services				
Personal Services Recommendation # 1: NPS interpreter-led tours				
Increase frequency and publicity of daily programs	X			$
Introduce roving rangers during peak visitation periods	X			$
Explore options for a passenger van for driving tour	X			$$
Create NPS Junior Ranger program		X		$
Offer NPS-quality interpreter training to Key Partner volunteers		X		$
Consider rotating starting points for tours among Key Partner and Community Partner sites		X		$
Expand range of topics for interpretive programs, per Interpretive Theme Matrix			X	$
Personal Services Recommendation # 2: Educational programming				
Create an educational advisory group	X			$
Develop targeted, grade-level and subject-specific curriculum		X		$$
Prepare and deliver “traveling trunk” outreach to schools			X	$
Coordinate and host on-site school visits at the park			X	$$
Personal Services Recommendation # 3: Outreach and Special Programming for Locals				
Offer special-occasion tours for local residents	X	X	X	$
Support local festivals and events with mini-interpretive programs	X	X	X	$
Present occasional programs to civic clubs, local chamber, other local groups	X	X	X	$
Create interpretive activities to connect local visitors to park	X	X	X	$

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historic Park: Priorities by Interpretive Service	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Cost Projection
Non-Personal Services/Interpretive Media				
Interpretive Media Recommendation # 1: Print publications				
Create a master map of the park for wide distribution	X			$
Create an NPS unigrid brochure using the master map	X			$
Create an NPS rack card for wide distribution	X			$
Develop a park master calendar system for multiple platforms and venues	X			$
Launch a twice-yearly park newsletter		X		$
Plan and develop series of NPS Site Bulletins for in-depth coverage of theme topics			X	$
Interpretive Media Recommendation # 2: Audiovisual materials				
Add images to the existing tour podcast	X			$
Seek funding for a park overview film for the Interim Visitor Contact Center	X			$
Produce the park overview film, with segments for use in multiple venues		X		$
Explore adaption of battlefield-focus films for rotating use		X	X	$
Consider creation or acquisition of other short films or digital slide shows for IVCS and other venues/uses		X	X	$
Interpretive Media Recommendation # 3: Web-based media				
Continue to enrich the NPS park website	X	X	X	$
Continue to adapt interpretive materials in cross-platform ways for use on the web	X	X	X	$
Explore social media to promote park and encourage two-way communication with visitors and stakeholders		X	X	$
Interpretive Media Recommendation # 4: Exterior Exhibits				
Support and encourage the branding taskforce to address branding/identity of park	X	X	X	$
Seek funding for a phased-in, comprehensive wayside exhibit plan for the entire park	X	X		$$
Create an outdoor interpretive kiosk for the new IVCC		X		$
Choose and analyze needs of key landscapes as pilot sites for wayside exhibits		X		$
Reevaluate existing signs and markers within the park			X	$
Interpretive Media Recommendation # 5: Interior Exhibits				
Create a small park overview exhibit around the fiber-optic map in the IVCS	X			$ - $$
Create a one-panel SV Battlefields NHD exhibit for the IVCS	X			$
Create a portable display/exhibit for the park for festivals, etc.	X			$
Interpretive Media Recommendation # 6: Image Database				
Create an image library for future interpretive use	X	X	X	$

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historic Park: Priorities by Interpretive Service	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Cost Projection
Research Needs in Support of Interpretation				
Research Recommendation # 1: NPS artifacts and archival materials				
Research available NPS artifacts and archival materials to support interpretation		X		$
Research Recommendation # 2: Partner artifacts and archival materials				
Seek Key Partner input on artifacts and archival materials to support interpretation		X		$
Research Recommendation # 3: Bibliography		X		
Create a high-quality bibliography of authoritative sources on the park			X	$
Research Recommendation # 4: NPS research reports				
Assess need for additional NPS research reports (Historic Structures reports, Cultural Landscape reports, etc.) in support of interpretation			X	$$
Staffing Needs for Interpretation				
Add seasonal employees in interpretation	X	X	X	$$
Add student interns in interpretation	X	X	X	$$
Increase volunteers interpretation	X	X	X	$
Add Teacher-Ranger-Teacher(s) in interpretation		X	X	$$

Appendices

Appendix A: Founding Legislation

Public Law 107–373
107th Congress
An Act
To designate the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
This Act may be cited as the ''Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park Act''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.
The purpose of this Act is to establish the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park in order to—

(1) help preserve, protect, and interpret a nationally significant Civil War landscape and antebellum plantation for the education, inspiration, and benefit of present and future generations;
(2) tell the rich story of Shenandoah Valley history from early settlement through the Civil War and beyond, and the Battle of Cedar Creek and its significance in the conduct of the war in the Shenandoah Valley;
(3) preserve the significant historic, natural, cultural, military, and scenic resources found in the Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove Plantation areas through partnerships with local landowners and the community; and
(4) serve as a focal point to recognize and interpret important events and geographic locations within the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District representing key Civil War battles in the Shenandoah Valley, including those battlefields associated with the Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson campaign of 1862 and the decisive campaigns of 1864.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.
Congress finds the following:

(1) The Battle of Cedar Creek, also known as the battle of Belle Grove, was a major event of the Civil War and the history of this country. It represented the end of the Civil War's Shenandoah Valley campaign of 1864 and contributed to the reelection of President Abraham Lincoln and the eventual outcome of the war.
(2) 2,500 acres of the Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove Plantation were designated a national historic landmark in 1969 because of their ability to illustrate and interpret important eras and events in the history of the United States. The Cedar Creek Battlefield, Belle Grove Manor House, the Heater House, and Harmony Hall (a National Historic Landmark) are also listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register.
(3) The Secretary of the Interior has approved the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District Management Plan and the National Park Service Special Resource Study, both of which recognized Cedar Creek Battlefield as the most significant Civil War resource within the historic district. The management plan, which was developed with extensive public participation over a 3-year period and is administered by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, recommends that Cedar Creek Battlefield be established as a new unit of the National Park System.
(4) The Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, organized in 1988 to preserve and interpret the Cedar Creek Battlefield and the 1864 Valley Campaign, has acquired 308 acres of land within the boundaries of the National Historic Landmark. The foundation annually hosts a major reenactment and living history event on the Cedar Creek Battlefield.
(5) Belle Grove Plantation is a Historic Site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation that occupies

383 acres within the National Historic Landmark. The Belle Grove Manor House was built by Isaac Hite, a Revolutionary War patriot married to the sister of President James Madison, who was a frequent visitor at Belle Grove. President Thomas Jefferson assisted with the design of the house. During the Civil War Belle Grove was at the center of the decisive battle of Cedar Creek. Belle Grove is managed locally by Belle Grove, Incorporated, and has been open to the public since 1967. The house has remained virtually unchanged since it was built in 1797, offering visitors an experience of the life and times of the people who lived there in the 18th and 19th centuries.

(6) The panoramic views of the mountains, natural areas, and waterways provide visitors with an inspiring setting of great natural beauty. The historic, natural, cultural, military, and scenic resources found in the Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove Plantation areas are nationally and regionally significant.

(7) The existing, independent, not-for-profit organizations dedicated to the protection and interpretation of the resources described above provide the foundation for public-private partnerships to further the success of protecting, preserving, and interpreting these resources.

(8) None of these resources, sites, or stories of the Shenandoah Valley are protected by or interpreted within the National Park System.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term "Commission" means the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park Advisory Commission established by section 9.

(2) MAP.—The term "Map" means the map entitled "Boundary Map Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park", numbered CEBE–80,001, and dated September 2002.

(3) PARK.—The term "Park" means the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park established under section 5 and depicted on the Map.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF CEDAR CREEK AND BELLE GROVE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park, consisting of approximately 3,000 acres, as generally depicted on the Map.

(b) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The Map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

SEC. 6. ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY.

(a) REAL PROPERTY.—The Secretary may acquire land or interests in land within the boundaries of the Park, from willing sellers only, by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange.

(b) BOUNDARY REVISION.—After acquiring land for the Park, the Secretary shall—

(1) revise the boundary of the Park to include newly acquired land within the boundary; and

(2) administer newly acquired land subject to applicable laws (including regulations).

(c) PERSONAL PROPERTY.—The Secretary may acquire personal property associated with, and appropriate for, interpretation of the Park.

(d) CONSERVATION EASEMENTS AND COVENANTS.—The Secretary is authorized to acquire conservation easements and enter into covenants regarding lands in or adjacent to the Park from willing sellers only. Such conservation easements and covenants shall have the effect of protecting the scenic, natural, and historic resources on adjacent lands and preserving the natural or historic setting of the Park when viewed from within or outside the Park.

(e) SUPPORT FACILITIES.—The National Park Service is authorized to acquire from willing sellers, land outside the Park boundary but in close proximity to the Park, for the development of visitor, administrative, museum, curatorial, and maintenance facilities.

SEC. 7. ADMINISTRATION.

The Secretary shall administer the Park in accordance with this Act and the provisions of law generally applicable to units of the National Park System, including—

(1) the Act entitled "An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes", approved August 25, 1916 (16 U.S.C. 1 et seq.); and
(2) the Act entitled "An Act to provide for the preservation of historic American sites, buildings, objects, and antiquities of national significance, and for other purposes", approved August 21, 1935 (16 U.S.C. 461 et seq.).

SEC. 8. MANAGEMENT OF PARK.
(a) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Commission, shall prepare a management plan for the Park. In particular, the management plan shall contain provisions to address the needs of owners of non-Federal land, including independent
nonprofit organizations within the boundaries of the Park.
(b) SUBMISSION OF PLAN TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit the management plan for the Park to the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

SEC. 9. CEDAR CREEK AND BELLE GROVE NATIONAL HISTORICAL
PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION.
(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park Advisory Commission.
(b) DUTIES.—The Commission shall—
(1) advise the Secretary in the preparation and implementation of a general management plan described in section 8; and
(2) advise the Secretary with respect to the identification of sites of significance outside the Park boundary deemed necessary to fulfill the purposes of this Act.
(c) MEMBERSHIP.—
(1) COMPOSITION.—The Commission shall be composed of 15 members appointed by the Secretary so as to include the following:
(A) 1 representative from the Commonwealth of Virginia.
(B) 1 representative each from the local governments of Strasburg, Middletown, Frederick County, Shenandoah County, and Warren County.
(C) 2 representatives of private landowners within the Park.
(D) 1 representative from a citizen interest group.
(E) 1 representative from the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation.
(F) 1 representative from Belle Grove, Incorporated.
(G) 1 representative from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
(H) 1 representative from the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation.
(I) 1 ex-officio representative from the National Park Service.
(J) 1 ex-officio representative from the United States Forest Service.
(2) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Commission shall be elected by the members to serve a term of one year renewable for one additional year.
(3) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Commission shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.
(4) TERMS OF SERVICE.—
(A) IN GENERAL.—Each member shall be appointed for a term of 3 years and may be reappointed for not more than 2 successive terms.
(B) INITIAL MEMBERS.—Of the members first appointed under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall appoint—
(i) 4 members for a term of 1 year;
(ii) 5 members for a term of 2 years; and
(iii) 6 members for a term of 3 years.
(5) EXTENDED SERVICE.—A member may serve after the expiration of that member's term until a successor has taken office.
(6) MAJORITY RULE.—The Commission shall act and advise by affirmative vote of a majority of

its members.

(7) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at least quarterly at the call of the chairperson or a majority of the members of the Commission.

(8) QUORUM.—8 members shall constitute a quorum.

(d) COMPENSATION.—Members shall serve without pay. Members who are full-time officers or employees of the United States, the Commonwealth of Virginia, or any political subdivision thereof shall receive no additional pay on account of their service on the Commission.

(e) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—While away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of service for the Commission, members shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as persons employed intermittently in the Government service are allowed expenses under section 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(f) HEARINGS; PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT.—The Commission may, for purposes of carrying out this Act, hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such public testimony, and receive such evidence, as the Commission considers appropriate. The Commission may not issue subpoenas or exercise any subpoena authority.

SEC. 10. CONSERVATION OF CEDAR CREEK AND BELLE GROVE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK.

(a) ENCOURAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION.—The Secretary and the Commission shall encourage conservation of the historic and natural resources within and in proximity of the Park by landowners, local governments, organizations, and businesses.

(b) PROVISION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may provide technical assistance to local governments, in cooperative efforts which complement the values of the Park.

(c) COOPERATION BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Any Federal entity conducting or supporting activities directly affecting the Park shall consult, cooperate, and, to the maximum extent practicable, coordinate its activities with the Secretary in a manner that—

(1) is consistent with the purposes of this Act and the standards and criteria established pursuant to the general management plan developed pursuant to section 8;

(2) is not likely to have an adverse effect on the resources of the Park; and

(3) is likely to provide for full public participation in order to consider the views of all interested parties.

SEC. 11. ENDOWMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with the provisions of subsection (b), the Secretary is authorized to receive and expend funds from an endowment to be established with the National Park Foundation, or its successors and assigns.

(b) CONDITIONS.—Funds from the endowment referred to in subsection (a) shall be expended exclusively as the Secretary, in consultation with the Commission, may designate for the interpretation, preservation, and maintenance of the Park resources and public access areas. No expenditure shall be made pursuant to this section unless the Secretary determines that such expenditure is consistent with the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 12. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to further the purposes of this Act, the Secretary is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with interested public and private entities and individuals (including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Belle Grove, Inc., the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, and the Counties of Frederick, Shenandoah, and Warren), through technical and financial assistance, including encouraging the conservation of historic and natural resources of the Park.

(b) TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may provide to any person, organization, or governmental entity technical and financial assistance for the purposes of this Act, including the following:

(1) Preserving historic structures within the Park.

(2) Maintaining the natural or cultural landscape of the Park.

(3) Local preservation planning, interpretation, and management of public visitation for the Park.
(4) Furthering the goals of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation related to the Park.

SEC. 13. ROLES OF KEY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In recognition that central portions of the Park are presently owned and operated for the benefit of the public by key partner organizations, the Secretary shall acknowledge and support the continued participation of these partner organizations in the management of the Park.

(b) PARK PARTNERS.—Roles of the current key partners include the following:

(1) CEDAR CREEK BATTLEFIELD FOUNDATION.—The Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation may—

(A) continue to own, operate, and manage the lands acquired by the Foundation within the Park;
(B) continue to conduct reenactments and other events within the Park; and
(C) transfer ownership interest in portions of their land to the National Park Service by donation, sale, or other means that meet the legal requirements of National Park Service land acquisitions.

(2) NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND BELLE GROVE INCORPORATED.—The National Trust for Historic Preservation and Belle Grove Incorporated may continue to own, operate, and manage Belle Grove Plantation and its structures and grounds within the Park boundary. Belle Grove Incorporated may continue to own the house and grounds known as Bowman's Fort or Harmony Hall for the purpose of permanent preservation, with a long-term goal of opening the property to the public.

(3) SHENANDOAH COUNTY.—Shenandoah County may continue to own, operate, and manage the Keister park site within the Park for the benefit of the public.

(4) PARK COMMUNITY PARTNERS.—The Secretary shall cooperate with the Park's adjacent historic towns of Strasburg and Middletown, Virginia, as well as Frederick, Shenandoah, and Warren counties in furthering the purposes of the Park.

(5) SHENANDOAH VALLEY BATTLEFIELDS FOUNDATION.—The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation may continue to administer and manage the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District in partnership with the National Park Service and in accordance with the Management Plan for the District in which the Park is located.

SEC. 14. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this Act.

Approved December 19, 2002.

Appendix B: Interpretive Planning Team

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park
Diann Jacox, Park Superintendent
Eric Campbell, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Tonia Horton, Historic Landscape Architect

NPS Northeast Region
Joanne Blacoe, Interpretive Planner, Northeast Regional Office
Russ Smith, Park Superintendent, Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park

NPS Harpers Ferry Center
Peggy Scherbaum, Contracting Officer's Representative

Key Partners
John Adamson, Belle Grove, Inc
Terry Heder, Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation
Stanley M. Hirschlerg, M.D., Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP Federal Advisory Commission members and others who participated in the Interpretive Planning Workshops
Commission members in attendance:
Diann Jacox, Designated Federal Official (DFO)
John Adamson, Belle Grove
Fred Andreae, National Trust
Mary Bowser, private landowner
Patrick Farris, Warren County, chair
Carl Bernhards, Middletown
Stanley M. Hirschberg, Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation
Eric Lawrence, Frederick County
Sarah Mauck, Strasburg
Elizabeth McClung, Belle Grove
Rob Nieweg, National Trust for Historic Preservation
Nick Picerno, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation
Pam Sheets, Shenandoah County

Others in attendance:
Joanne Blacoe, NPS Northeast Regional Office
Bob Grogg, NPS volunteer
Terry Heder, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation
Rick Redmond, Strasburg
Russ Smith, NPS, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania NMP
Elizabeth Stern, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

Consultant Team
Shannon G. Kettering, ASLA, AICP, Project Manager, Pond | Ecos
Faye Goolrick, Certified Interpretive Planner, Goolrick Interpretive Group

Harpers Ferry Center
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP

7718 1/2 Main Street
Middletown, VA 22645

(540) 868-9176

www.nps.gov/cebe

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