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# Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

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special boundary study · newsletter #2

Cover illustration: Stonewall Jackson Monument at Court House, Clarksburg, West Virginia – Jackson's place of birth  
School House Ridge battlefield – Most significant Civil War battle in West Virginia and Site of Stonewall's brilliant victory

**special boundary study**

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**newsletter**

october 1989

**HARPERS FERRY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK**

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service



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The downriver view from Harpers Ferry – a subject of landscape artists for 300 years and described by Thomas Jefferson in 1783 in his journals on the state of Virginia.



In 1988 Congress authorized this study to examine issues concerning lands adjacent to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Visitors to the park are surrounded by a cultural richness and scenic beauty that is integral to the park experience. Many of these qualities come from nationally significant resources lying outside the park that are not protected and could potentially be lost through impending land use changes. The rural open landscape of the Harpers Ferry battlefield, General Stonewall Jackson's panoramic view of his surrounded foe, the magnificent downriver vista from Jefferson Rock, and the imposing backdrop of the Blue Ridge – all are intrinsic and critical images that visitors retain long after their visit ends. However, early attempts to find ways of protecting these resources and preserving the visitor experience through local and state means have been unsuccessful and have lead to this special boundary study, which is being initiated to find a way to help preserve these unique resources of America's heritage.

The first step in the special boundary study was a public workshop in March 1989; a July 1989 newsletter outlined the study process, summarized issues and concerns from the workshop, and incorporated comments that were received after the workshop. This second newsletter updates the progress of the special boundary study and solicits additional public input. After the release of this second newsletter, another public workshop will be conducted in the Harpers Ferry area to discuss the study and explore protection options for the nationally significant resources adjacent to the park. Comments from that public meeting will be incorporated into the final study. The final study will identify nationally significant cultural and scenic lands outside the current boundary that are integral to the

park and provide a range of methods for protecting those lands.

The following four management objectives, developed from the legislation that established the park, are fundamental to this special boundary study:

- To offer visitors an opportunity to understand and appreciate the park's cultural/historical themes, which include: John Brown's raid, industrial and scientific history (U.S. Armory and Hall's Rifle Works), the Civil War, and Black history.
- To present existing cultural/historic resources as nearly as possible to their appearance in mid-19th century times.
- To make these cultural/historic resources accessible to many park visitors while not altering the character of the surrounding community and/or harmony of community activities.
- To protect the aesthetic values of the park by ensuring that development within and around it is compatible with the historic and natural scene.

From these four objectives, the protection of cultural and scenic resources can be seen as major elements in meeting the management objectives while enhancing the visitor's experience of the park. For the purpose of this document, two general management objectives are appropriate and essential. They are as follows:

- **Cultural Resources** – To interpret and preserve in perpetuity the cultural/historic sites and resources relating to the park themes of John Brown's raid, industrial and scientific history, the Civil War, and Black history.
- **Scenic Resources** – To conserve the combination of open agricultural lands and undeveloped wooded terrain that is integral to the scenic historic setting and that relates to park themes and objectives.

Using these objectives and the legislation, nationally significant cultural and scenic resources outside the park boundary that contribute to park objectives were identified (see Cultural Resources and Scenic Resources maps in the "Resource Areas" section). These significant resources have been grouped into six resource areas, which are listed below. These six resource areas, shown on the following map, contain portions of all the nine study areas that were described in the first newsletter and additional areas that have been identified during further analysis and through public comments.

School House Ridge–Bolivar Heights  
Jefferson View  
Maryland Heights  
Loudoun Heights  
Park Approach  
U.S. Armory

The significance and objectives for the six resource areas are described in this newsletter. Many landowners in the resource areas have been contacted to discuss the study. The National Park Service is interested in determining the appropriate methods of protection needed to conserve the nationally significant cultural and scenic resources in each of these areas.





## RESOURCE AREAS

**HARPERS FERRY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK**  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Major General A.P. Hill's division (under orders from Stonewall Jackson) approaching the Chambers farm to flank the Federal position on Bolivar Heights



The park was created in 1944 to commemorate the historic events that occurred in and near Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. At that time it was thought that all nationally significant resources were protected within the park boundary. However, over the years many resources that provide important aspects of the park's history and the park visitors' experiences have been identified outside the park boundary. Some of these nationally significant cultural and scenic resources are privately owned and exist on lands experiencing the pressures of suburbanization. The potential for unprecedented growth and changes from rural agriculture to residential and commercial development could destructively alter cultural and scenic resources. The opportunity to conserve these resources is quickly fading. This planning effort seeks to find creative alternatives that will protect these resources.

In 1944 the West Virginia communities of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar (the most populous towns in the area being studied) were small and surrounded by a beautiful, unspoiled landscape. Since those days, the park and the communities have changed dramatically. When the park was established, agricultural use of adjacent lands was expected to continue. Now, many of these lands face imminent conversion to residential and commercial uses. The *Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan* (Jefferson County Planning Commission 1986) estimated that this West Virginian county's population will reach nearly 50,000 by 1998 – triple the population of the early 1950s. Annual park visitation is approximately 1 million and is expected to continue to rise through the next century. Population growth has resulted in significant increases in traffic. Heavy traffic on US 340 has required a bypass – now under construction around Charles Town, West Virginia, about 6 miles west of the park.

In 1988 Jefferson County officials recognized this rapid rise in population and enacted a zoning ordinance – the first in West Virginia (*Zoning and Development Review Ordinance*, July 7, 1988). This ordinance defines residential and commercial growth areas in the county. Current zoning does not distinguish between the lands that are significant in our nation's history and other lands in the county.

The national historical park and its surrounding landscape are at a crossroads. The knowledge and inspiration the park provides to visitors, the positive image the park brings to the tri-state region, the quality of life it provides local landowners, and the significant role the park plays in the regional tourism economy are all major reasons for providing protection from incompatible land uses around the park boundary. Difficult decisions about the park's future lie ahead. The final special boundary study will help guide those decisions as the park moves into the 21st century.



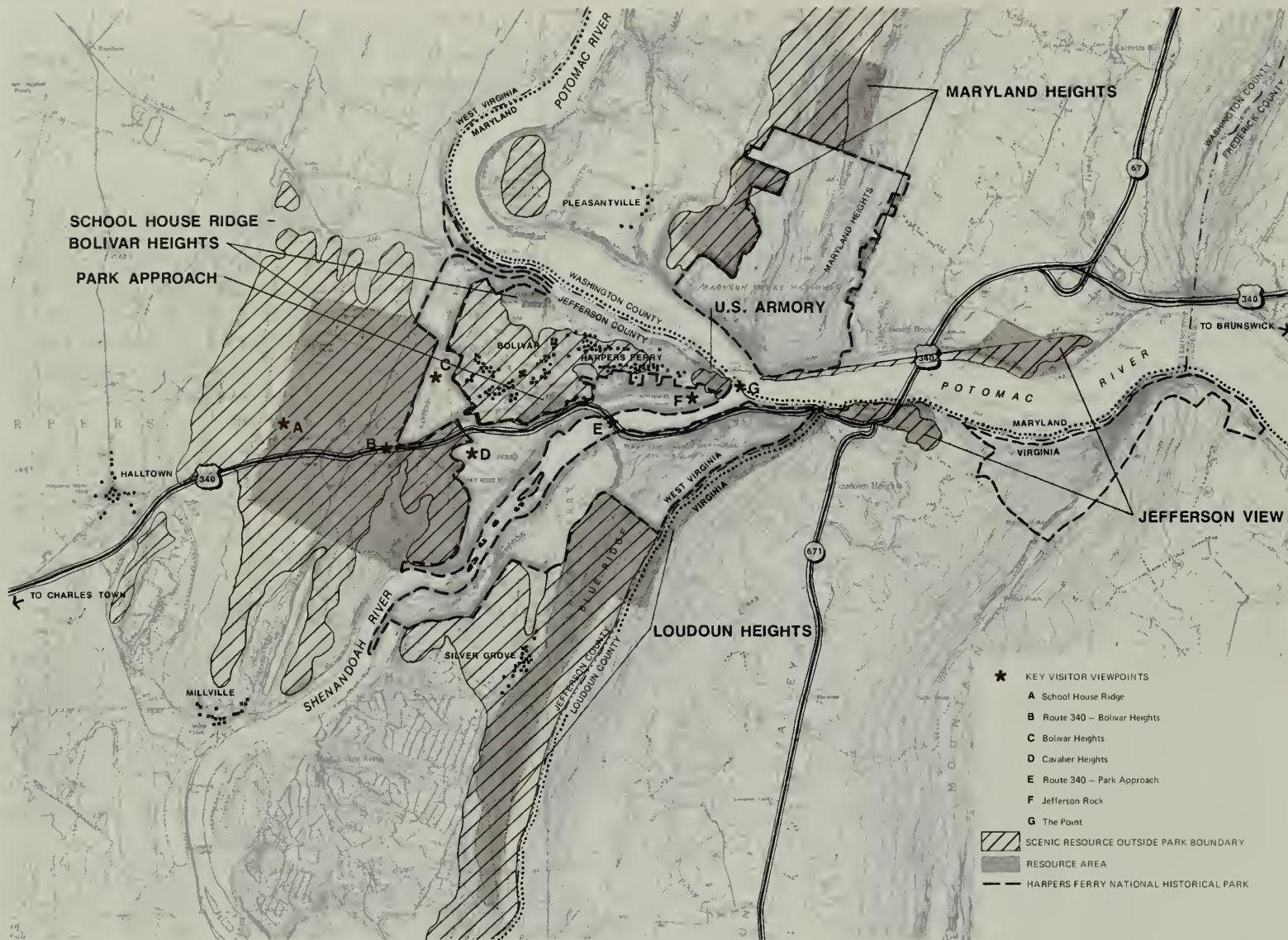


The surrender of the Union garrison to Major General Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson on September 15, 1862.

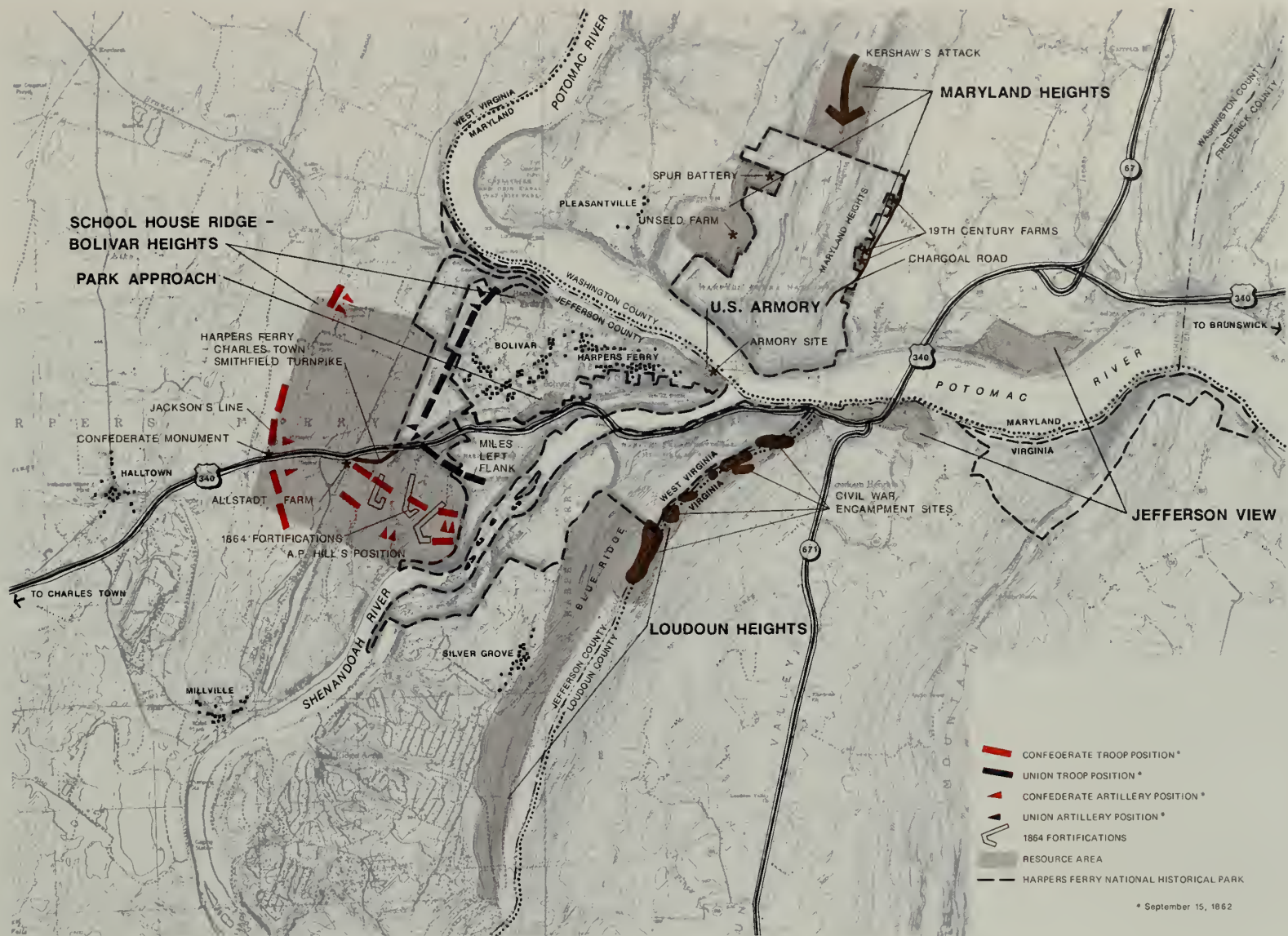


In this section, the significance and objectives for the cultural and scenic resources are presented. All of the objectives were derived from the goals of resource preservation and enhancement of the visitor experience. Within each of the six resources areas there are various nationally significant resources, which are shown on the following Scenic Resources and Cultural Resources maps.

RESOURCE AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	OBJECTIVES
<b>SCHOOL HOUSE RIDGE– BOLIVAR HEIGHTS</b>  <i>For the past 127 years the School House Ridge battlefield has retained much of its Civil War appearance. However, increasing pressures from residential and commercial development now threaten the integrity of this battlefield.</i>	<p>On September 13-15, 1862, the positions of Generals Thomas J. Jackson and A.P. Hill, the Union defensive positions of Colonel Miles' left flank, and Confederate troop movements were evident on this portion of the Harpers Ferry battlefield. Other significant historic resources in the area include a trace of the Harpers Ferry–Charles Town–Smithfield Turnpike; the historic Allstadt farm; and General Sheridan's fortifications (constructed in 1864). This area is also part of the historic and scenic view from Bolivar Heights and Cavalier Heights.</p>	<p>The site of the Harpers Ferry Battle (September 13-15, 1862) and other Civil War events and additional aspects of mid-19th century life that contribute to park themes and objectives should be conserved and interpreted.</p>
<p>Jackson's Line</p>	<p>General Stonewall Jackson deployed 14,000 men across this ridge, sealing the Union garrison in a trap at Harpers Ferry. From here Jackson orchestrated the three-day siege and received the Federal surrender on the morning of September 15, 1862.</p>	<p>The open character of the historic farmland between Bolivar Heights and School House Ridge should be maintained, and public access to School House Ridge should be developed so that Confederate troop movements and the position of Jackson's army during the Harpers Ferry Battle can be commemorated and interpreted from School House Ridge and Bolivar Heights.</p>







## CULTURAL RESOURCES

### HARPERS FERRY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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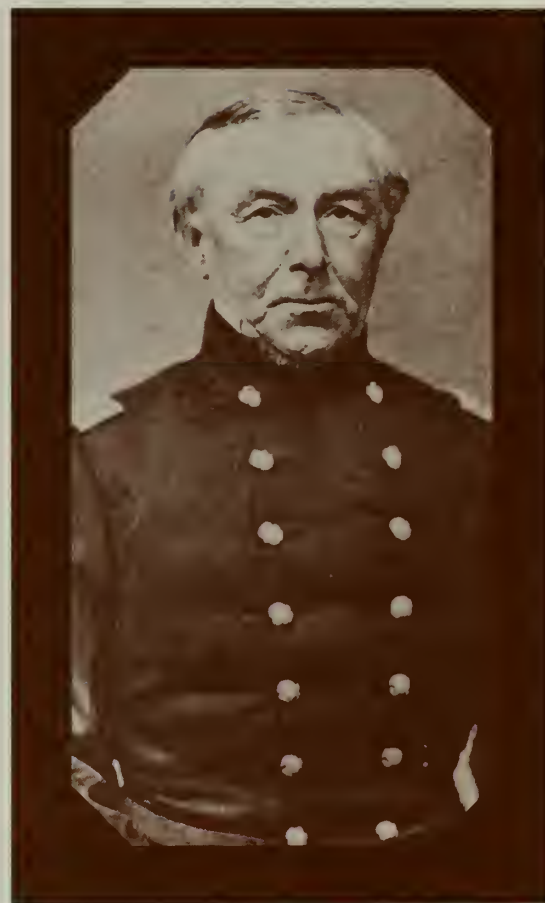
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Stonewall Jackson



Major General A.P. Hill



Colonel Dixon Miles



RESOURCE AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	OBJECTIVES
<b>SCHOOL HOUSE RIDGE- BOLIVAR HEIGHTS (cont.)</b>		
A.P. Hill's Position/ Miles' Left Flank	General A.P. Hill's division of 3,000 men marched to and deployed on the Chambers farm during the night of September 14, 1862. This maneuver proved to be the turning point of the siege, because Hill had flanked the Union left that had been formed here by Union regiments from Ohio, Vermont, Maryland, and New York. The beleaguered Union troops could not withstand the withering artillery fire from Hill's gun on the Chambers farm and the Confederate cannon on Loudoun Heights. The final maneuver by Hill necessitated the Federal surrender on the morning of the 15th.	The appearance of the wooded ridgetop and valleys and the historic buildings and open farmland character should be maintained. Eventually, public access to the Chambers farm should be provided so that General Hill's Confederate flanking position on the farm and Miles' defensive left flank can be commemorated and interpreted from Bolivar Heights, the farm, and the park's visitor contact facilities on Cavalier Heights.
Historic Turnpike	General Stonewall Jackson cut off this avenue of Federal escape when he seized School House Ridge on September 14, 1862. This remnant of the Harpers Ferry-Charles Town-Smithfield Turnpike (constructed in the 1830s) was a portion of (1) a strategic route during the 1862 Harpers Ferry Battle, (2) the primary supply route to Harpers Ferry for Sheridan's army during the 1864 Valley Campaign, and (3) one of several turnpikes constructed in the area to improve transportation.	The remaining road trace should be maintained to interpret the historic turnpike.

RESOURCE AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	OBJECTIVES
<b>SCHOOL HOUSE RIDGE– BOLIVAR HEIGHTS (cont.)</b>		
Confederate Monument	Confederate veterans from Jefferson County erected this monument in 1910 to commemorate General Thomas J. Jackson's main position during the 1862 Harpers Ferry Battle. This marker bears testimony to Jackson's brilliant September 15 victory in the most significant Civil War battle in West Virginia.	Public viewing and interpretation of the monument should be provided.
Allstadt Farm	In conjunction with the historic raid, John Brown's men seized John Allstadt and his son here on October 17, 1859; they remained hostages until freed by the Marine attack on the armory engine house. This cluster of farm buildings, little changed since the Civil War, stands as the most prominent cultural feature seen from the School House Ridge–Bolivar Heights battlefield at the time of the Harpers Ferry Battle in 1862.	The historic buildings and farm setting should be maintained for their interpretive value. Public access into these buildings is not necessary.
Sheridan's Fortifications	These three 1864 earthwork fortifications, constructed by General Sheridan's men to protect the Union supply base at Harpers Ferry, are among the best preserved Civil War fortifications in West Virginia and are visible remnants of the park's Civil War history.	The historic earthworks should be preserved.

RESOURCE AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	OBJECTIVES
<b>SCHOOL HOUSE RIDGE- BOLIVAR HEIGHTS (cont.)</b>		
Bolivar Heights (North)	<p>A Confederate encampment and battery position in the spring of 1861, Colonel Thomas J. Jackson drilled troops here and built the foundation of his famous "Stonewall" brigade. The area also served as a Union campground from 1862-1865, and General Sheridan's men constructed earthwork fortifications here in 1864 to protect approaches to Bolivar Heights.</p>	<p>The wooded and open character of the land and the historic earthworks should be maintained, and eventual public access should be provided for interpretation of the Harpers Ferry Battle of September 1862 and the earthwork fortifications.</p>
<b>JEFFERSON VIEW</b>		
<p><i>These lands have remained largely unchanged since Thomas Jefferson proclaimed their beauty. However, potential development in this resource area could impinge on the integrity of this scenic view.</i></p>	<p>The downriver view through the natural watgap in the Blue Ridge Mountains from Jefferson Rock in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, was proclaimed in 1783 by Thomas Jefferson as "worth a voyage across the Atlantic." The mountains, hillsides, and rivers comprising this view remain largely unspoiled by modern development. Also visible from the point at the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers, this view continues to be the park's most celebrated scenic resource. However, not all of the lands within this scenic view are protected by federal government ownership, and incompatible development that would destroy the view could occur.</p>	<p>The undeveloped wooded slopes along the Potomac River in Maryland and Virginia through the Harpers Ferry gap that are not already in the park should be maintained as Thomas Jefferson saw them in 1783 so that interpretation of this scenic view can continue. Public access to these lands is not necessary.</p>

RESOURCE AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	OBJECTIVES
<p><b>MARYLAND HEIGHTS</b></p> <p><i>These wooded lands and open fields on Maryland Heights contain significant historic resources and have a dramatic impact on the scenic view from Bolivar Heights and Cavalier Heights.</i></p>	<p>In this portion of the Harpers Ferry battlefield, Confederate General Joseph Kershaw's brigade successfully advanced on the Union defenses of Colonel Sherrill, resulting in the capture of Maryland Heights (September 13, 1862). Other significant resources in Maryland Heights include (1) a well-preserved Union battery; (2) the historic Unseld farm, which was used by Union commanders as a command post throughout the Civil War; and (3) 19th century remnants of the charcoal industry and mountain farming. The west side of this area is within the significant scenic views from Bolivar Heights and Cavalier Heights.</p>	<p>The wooded ridgetop, natural terrain, and historic resources still evident on Maryland Heights should be maintained to interpret and commemorate Kershaw's attack as the first and bloodiest engagement of the Harpers Ferry Battle and to interpret other Civil War events and aspects of the area's cultural heritage.</p>
<p>Kershaw's Attack</p>	<p>The bloodiest fighting of Jackson's siege occurred here on September 13, 1862, as 2,000 South Carolina and Mississippi troops led by General Joseph Kershaw's brigade advanced along this narrow crest through tangled abatis and against Union breastworks. The Federals abandoned this position, enabling Jackson to tighten the noose around Harpers Ferry garrison.</p>	<p>The forested ridgetop north of the Civil War stone fort on Maryland Heights should be maintained. Some public access to this area should eventually be provided for commemoration and interpretation of Kershaw's attack on the Union position.</p>
<p>Unseld Farm</p>	<p>Union commanders of the Maryland Heights defenses established their command center and headquarters in these original 1840s buildings. The largest encampments on Maryland Heights were here, and thousands of Federal troops transformed this level plateau into a tented city. Improvements to the spring, which remain today,</p>	<p>The appearance of the historic buildings and surrounding agricultural lands that were used by Union commanders throughout the Civil War should be maintained so that they can be interpreted from other prominent Union and Confederate positions on Loudoun Heights, Bolivar Heights, the Chambers</p>



RESOURCE AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	OBJECTIVES
<b>MARYLAND HEIGHTS</b> (cont.)	provided the primary water source for soldiers stationed on the heights above.	farm, and School House Ridge. Public access to those lands is not necessary.
Spur Battery	Constructed in June 1863 on a descending "spur" of the mountain, this Union position protected against attack from the north. This earthwork of the battery is the only remnant of Maryland Heights fortifications that is not within the park boundary.	The historic earthworks should be maintained, and public access should be provided so that the spur battery can be interpreted as part of the network of Union defensive positions on Maryland Heights.
Charcoal Road and Domestic Sites	The charcoal industry, which ended in the 1840s, was the first industry on Maryland Heights. The industry used this road as the primary transport route from the eastern side of the mountain. The remains of log cabins and mountain farms, which were constructed between 1850 and 1880 and include the property of a former slave, provide insights into 19th century domestic life.	The historic road trace should be maintained, as well as the mid-19th century foundations and ruins. The charcoaling industry on Maryland Heights and the domestic development of 19th century mountain farms should be interpreted.
<b>LOUDOUN HEIGHTS</b>  <i>With the park's Loudoun Heights property, this ridgetop land contains cultural resources and unspoiled natural integrity and provides a scenic backdrop for travelers heading east on US 340 and visitors to the park. The scenic qualities that local residents have enjoyed for many years are still intact on this land.</i>	Complementary to the other surrounding heights, Loudoun Heights contains well-preserved remnants of fortifications and encampment sites for the defense of Harpers Ferry. Its wooded ridgetop and western slope preserve much of the rural setting of the park. This area is also part of the significant scenic views from Bolivar Heights and Cavalier Heights.	The historic sites and fortifications should be maintained, and public access should be provided to them. The undeveloped woods along the western slope should be preserved to protect the outstanding scenic views from Bolivar Heights and other critical visitor viewpoints.

RESOURCE AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	OBJECTIVES
<b>LOUDOUN HEIGHTS (cont.)</b>		
Blockhouse/Encampment Sites	In May 1861 Colonel Thomas J. Jackson (later Stonewall) ordered construction of stone blockhouses here to defend the two towns. This is one of the earliest extant Confederate field fortifications in the country. Hundreds of stone hut foundations, constructed in October-November 1862 by soldiers from the Union XIIth Corps, are the remains of the largest and best-preserved Civil War encampment in the area.	The ridgetop woodlands should be maintained and the historic fortifications should be preserved. Public access should be provided to interpret the stone blockhouses and the extensive network of Civil War encampment sites.
Blue Ridge View	This scenic backdrop is especially significant from historic Bolivar Heights, the site of the largest surrender of Union troops during the Civil War, and from Cavalier Heights, which is the park's main entrance. The forested Blue Ridge Mountains, which extend south from historic Loudoun Heights, also provide a picturesque setting for the park and community. This resource area, combined with the park's other scenic resources – Short Hill Mountain, Maryland Heights, Loudoun Heights, and Bolivar Heights – is widely known for the beautiful fall colors of the trees.	The appearance of the wooded slopes should be maintained so that this prominent natural and scenic backdrop along the Blue Ridge Mountains continues to provide an undeveloped, rural landscape as seen from (1) historical viewpoints such as Bolivar Heights, School House Ridge, and Chambers farm, (2) visitor facilities on Cavalier Heights, and (3) US 340. Public access to these lands is not necessary.

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**RESOURCE AREA****SIGNIFICANCE****OBJECTIVES**

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**PARK APPROACH**

*These lands contain some of the last remaining wooded and undeveloped lots in the towns of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar. This area of green space screens many existing developments from US 340 and helps maintain the scenic and historic integrity of the park and towns.*

The US 340 corridor across the Shenandoah River into West Virginia provides travelers and Appalachian Trail hikers with their first impression of the park, Jefferson County, and the state. The slopes along US 340 are mostly wooded, with some evidence of modern development. This wooded land along the ridge above the St. Peters Roman Catholic Cemetery is important for screening modern residential development from view, thus retaining the rural and historic character of the park and community.

Visitors and travelers entering the park and the Shenandoah Valley from this eastern gateway to West Virginia should be provided with the appearance of a rural setting by maintaining the existing woods above the cemetery. Public access to these lands is not necessary.

**U.S. ARMORY**

*This land is currently owned by the B&O Railroad and includes a train station and active trackage. Legislation in 1960 authorized the acquisition of these lands through exchange of federally owned park lands or interest in land of approximately equal value in the vicinity of Cumberland, Maryland. This exchange has not yet taken place.*

The U.S. Armory grounds, site of a once-thriving gun manufacturing industry and the original site of John Brown's fort, lie outside the park boundary along the banks of the Potomac River near its confluence with the Shenandoah River. The building foundations are the only remaining evidence of this Federal industry, and they are the most significant unprotected historic resources in the town of Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.

The grounds, historic foundations, and archeological sites should be maintained, and public access should be provided for interpretation and commemoration of the U.S. Armory (1796-1861) – as one of two Federal armories in the United States where the techniques of gun manufacturing were developed and as the focal point of military, industrial, and social history at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. The railroad operation should continue.





Union General Philip Sheridan's men constructing a 2-mile line of large earthwork defenses connecting six artillery redoubts along the crest of Bolivar Heights in 1864.



With the identification of the nationally significant resources that are outside of the park boundary, consideration must be given as to how to protect these resources. As a way of comparing what impact future actions or inactions might have on the resources, the park, and the locale, the Park Service has projected three possible alternatives. These three alternatives or futures, listed below, provide a way of evaluating the possible outcomes of actions taken.

## **Alternative A - Continued Private Ownership – No federal government action.**

In this alternative, all rights and interests in the lands external to the park that contain significant resources would remain in their current ownership. Future land use in these areas would be determined by the landowners and by existing and future county and municipal authorities and ordinances. The National Park Service would remain a neighboring landowner and attempt, through appropriate channels, to influence adjacent land uses that could affect park resources and/or the visitor experience.

## **Alternative B - Public Ownership – All land use would be in public (federal government) ownership.**

Those lands containing nationally significant park-related resources would be legislatively added to the park and acquired by the federal government.

## **Alternative C - Mixed Private and Public Ownership – A mix of public (federal government) and private landownership, with varying land use**

## **controls that would protect significant park-related resources.**

Those lands determined to contain nationally significant park-related resources would be legislatively added to the park. However, protection of these lands would be achieved through a range of public and private protection methods, not just through federal government fee acquisition as presented in alternative B. Protection methods would include fee acquisition, purchase and lease- or sell-back, life estates, scenic or agricultural easements, private land trusts or organizations, zoning regulations, landowner agreements, and other appropriate methods.

Specific protection methods to achieve the objective for each area or parcel would be determined through a park land protection plan following completion of this special boundary study and congressional legislation.

Under each alternative, two related discussions are presented. Land use trends in the resource areas are described, including current county zoning ordinances for the first alternative and expected future development trends for the other alternatives. Secondly, the likely future conditions of the lands in the resource areas are projected given the land use trends for each. This discussion attempts to forecast or paint a picture of the development that is likely to occur on the resource area lands in the next 20 years. The resource areas are shown on the Resource Areas map in the "Overview" section.

**ALTERNATIVE A: CONTINUED PRIVATE OWNERSHIP (NO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ACTION)**

RESOURCE AREA	LAND USE TRENDS	LIKELY FUTURE CONDITIONS
<b>SCHOOL HOUSE RIDGE- BOLIVAR HEIGHTS</b> (West Virginia)	Land use in this area, with the exception of the Bolivar Heights (north) area, is currently regulated by Jefferson County ordinances, including the <i>Zoning and Development Review Ordinance</i> adopted in July 1988. Most of the lands are currently zoned as a residential/growth district. Permitted uses in this district include single-family and multifamily dwelling units, mobile home parks, schools, hospitals, churches, public utility and service facilities, and nursing and retirement homes. The maximum permitted building height in this zone is 40 feet, although this restriction does not apply to public utilities, agricultural uses, communication poles or towers, chimneys, steeples, and others uses. Signs may not exceed 35 feet in height.	A 56-acre subdivision of 114 single-family units is proposed in the east-central portion of the resource area, between Union and Confederate lines. A significant portion of the rest of the resource area would likely be developed to high-density residential use. Locations for such development include the Shenandoah River bluffs on the historic Chambers farm and the elevated length of School House Ridge. It is not likely that the existing subdivision on the north end of the resource area would change its low-density character because it is an established residential area.
	The county has rezoned two parcels of approximately 80 acres adjacent to the south side of US 340. One parcel is across the highway from the Shipley school, and the other is in an area around the existing motel and RV campground. Much of the land in these two parcels is currently undeveloped. The lands were rezoned from their previous residential/growth district to an industrial/commercial district. Permitted uses subject to a review system) include	Additional commercial retail development would likely occur on the two rezoned parcels along the southern side of US 340. Future commercial development between these parcels would be possible, and it would also be possible on both sides of US 340 near the park's new visitor contact station at Cavalier Heights. Construction of additional stop lights and billboards in these vicinities would also be likely.

RESOURCE AREA	LAND USE TRENDS	LIKELY FUTURE CONDITIONS
<b>SCHOOL HOUSE RIDGE- BOLIVAR HEIGHTS (cont.)</b>	commercial retail development, asphalt and concrete plants, oil refineries, sawmills, and mineral extraction. Structures would be restricted to a maximum height of 75 feet, with the same exceptions as above for public utilities, chimneys, etc.	The lands in the Bolivar Heights (north) area are in the process of being donated to the National Park Service. After this legislative process is completed, park management will maintain the area in its natural condition and preserve the historic Civil War earthworks.
<b>LOUDOUN HEIGHTS (West Virginia)</b>	This resource area is zoned as a rural/agricultural district. Permitted uses include agriculture, single-family dwellings, churches, schools, public utility and service facilities, forestry, and horticultural nurseries. Structures are limited to a height of 35 feet, with the usual exceptions (public utilities, chimneys, etc.).	In the short term, this area would probably remain in its forested condition. However, within the next 20 years at least three types of changes would be possible. The area could be harvested for its timber; the communities of Silver Grove and Blue Ridge Acres could expand up the slope to the west along the Blue Ridge; and the area could be altered by a utility corridor or communication towers.

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**RESOURCE AREA****LAND USE TRENDS****LIKELY FUTURE CONDITIONS**

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**PARK APPROACH**  
(West Virginia)

This resource area is within the corporation of Bolivar. The Jefferson County zoning ordinance does not apply in incorporated areas, and the corporation regulates development through town council review.

Some of this area would likely be used for residential development. Residential sites are possible on the crest of the wooded bluff. Trees would probably be cleared on the edge of the slope for houses. Similar sites in the immediate area have already been developed in this manner. Under existing regulations, commercial or utility development could also occur.

**U.S. ARMORY**  
(West Virginia)

This resource area is within the corporation of Harpers Ferry, and Jefferson County's zoning ordinance does not apply. The corporation of Harpers Ferry is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has developed a land use plan and historic preservation ordinance that could provide protection of the resources.

Given that this area is in the floodplain of the Potomac River, its current uses for a railroad right-of-way and depot would not likely change.

**MARYLAND HEIGHTS  
AND A PORTION OF  
JEFFERSON VIEW**  
(Maryland)

The Maryland Heights resource area and a portion of the Jefferson View resource area are in Washington County, Maryland. Land use is regulated by the *Washington County Zoning Ordinance* (approved April 1973, with amendments though December 1988).

Nearby residential development in Pleasantville could easily expand onto the west slope of Maryland Heights. Ultimately the Unseld farm has potential for residential development. Some level of housing development could occur here using wells and septic systems.

The Maryland Heights resource area is zoned a conservation district. Permitted uses include forest preserves, campgrounds, golf courses, single-family dwellings and mobile homes on at least

Logging could occur in the area of Kershaw's attack, which would alter the undeveloped wooded appearance of the ridgeline.



RESOURCE AREA	LAND USE TRENDS	LIKELY FUTURE CONDITIONS
<b>MARYLAND HEIGHTS AND A PORTION OF JEFFERSON VIEW (cont.)</b>	<p>three acres, churches, sawmills, and trailer parks. The maximum building height is 35 feet, although this restriction does not apply to barns, silos, communication towers, chimneys, and other uses.</p> <p>The Jefferson View resource area is zoned a conservation district. Permitted land use in the conservation district is the same as described for the Maryland Heights resource area.</p>	<p>Development would be likely on the four parcels on the east side of Maryland Heights.</p> <p>Lands adjacent to the Jefferson View resource area have recently been subdivided and developed. Individual single-family dwellings have also been constructed. In the next 20 years, subdivisions and individual dwellings would likely be developed in this resource area, particularly on the undeveloped agricultural lands on the bluffs above the Potomac.</p>
<b>PORTIONS OF LOUDOUN HEIGHTS AND JEFFERSON VIEW (Virginia)</b>	<p>Portions of both the Loudoun Heights and Jefferson View resource areas are in Loudoun County, Virginia, and land uses are regulated by the <i>Zoning Ordinance of Loudoun County</i> (approved June 1972, with amendments through December 1987). The resource areas are within areas zoned as agricultural/residential. Permitted land uses include agricultural, forestry, single-family dwellings, and cluster residential developments with approved subdivision plats. Minimum lot size is 3 acres, and height is restricted to 35 feet with the usual exceptions of agricultural buildings, chimneys, utilities, and other uses.</p>	<p>It is unlikely that any Virginia lands in the Loudoun Heights resource area would be developed – they are currently protected in federal ownership and managed as part of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail.</p> <p>In the Jefferson View resource area the Hunt Club property would likely be redeveloped because it was the site of a large structure in the past and offers scenic views of the river. Additional commercial structures along the US 340 corridor would also be a possibility.</p>

**ALTERNATIVE B: PUBLIC OWNERSHIP**

The following discussions are applicable for all West Virginia, Maryland, and Virginia resource areas.

RESOURCE AREA	LAND USE TRENDS	LIKELY FUTURE CONDITIONS
INCLUDES ALL RESOURCE AREAS	<p>Congress would authorize a new boundary that would incorporate significant resource lands, which would be acquired in fee or less than fee, into Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. These lands and the historical resources they contain would be managed in the same manner as those that are currently within the park, leaving the lands and resources unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. The historical events at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park would be commemorated, historical themes would be interpreted, and historic resources and cultural landscapes would be preserved.</p> <p>Such management would likely include the maintenance of new park lands and resources in their current state. Undeveloped lands would remain unchanged, and compatible uses on these undeveloped lands (such as agriculture in the School House Ridge-Bolivar Heights resource area) would continue, maintaining the historic scene of the battlefield.</p>	<p>In 20 years, it is likely that the visual appearances of the lands added to the park would be approximately the same as they are today. In some areas, after incompatible uses were identified and removed, there would be less development than that which exists today. The agricultural or wooded appearance of many of these significant lands would still be apparent. Some of the cultural resource sites would contain visitor use facilities in the vicinity of the resource.</p>

**RESOURCE AREA****LAND USE TRENDS****LIKELY FUTURE CONDITIONS**

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During the process of revising the park's *Land Protection Plan* (National Park Service 1988) for all lands within the newly created park boundary, existing developments would be evaluated for their compatibility with park values and resources. Appropriate visitor use and interpretive improvements would be allowed on new park lands.



## ALTERNATIVE C: MIXED PRIVATE AND PUBLIC OWNERSHIPS

The following discussions are applicable for all West Virginia, Maryland, and Virginia resource areas.

RESOURCE AREA	LAND USE TRENDS	LIKELY FUTURE CONDITIONS
INCLUDES ALL RESOURCE AREAS	<p>Land uses would be determined by a mix of federal, county, municipal, and private entities and authorities, depending on the type of protection strategy used for each property.</p> <p>Congress would authorize a new boundary incorporating significant resource lands into Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Additionally it would provide legislative guidance directing the National Park Service to work with landowners and local and state governments to protect these significant resources based on federal government and landowner objectives to protect the property. Currently within the park boundary there are over 50 properties and 100 acres in private ownership that have been managed under scenic easements since the 1970s.</p> <p>Limited authority would be given the National Park Service to acquire a parcel if nationally significant resources were threatened or the loss would prevent the federal government from carrying out its objective in the area as described in this study.</p>	<p>Overall, the appearances of the lands included within the new boundary would be the same as those seen today. Additional development would occur on some of the lands, but the appearance of wooded, open, or pastoral lands would remain. Existing developments would also remain. Some of the cultural resource sites would have visitor use and educational exhibits.</p>

**RESOURCE AREA****LAND USE TRENDS****LIKELY FUTURE CONDITIONS**

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The primary difference between alternatives B and C is that in alternative B all significant lands would be acquired in fee and development would be prohibited on undeveloped lands; in alternative C, however, controlled development on undeveloped lands could be allowed if it did not compromise the specific objectives for that resource area. For example, if the specific objective for an area was to maintain its wooded appearance, then certain land uses – including low-density housing – could be allowed as long as the overall wooded appearance was not changed. Land use, therefore, would be determined on a case-by-case basis based on detailed site planning.





There are many options for implementing the alternatives. These include the following.

## **PRIVATE METHODS**

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- purchase by land trusts and private nonprofit organizations
- zoning to protect from incompatible uses
- real estate tax incentives for landowners
- protection by private owners

## **PUBLIC METHODS**

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- scenic or agricultural easements (the federal government would acquire specific rights to the land, but the land would remain in private ownership)
- purchase by the federal government and sell-back to the private individual with restrictions attached to the deed
- leasing land to the federal government (the land would remain in private ownership)
- lease-back (the federal government would acquire the land and lease it back to the private individual with certain restrictions)
- cooperative agreements with landowners
- fee acquisition of land
- real estate tax incentives for landowners
- life estate





## PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE STUDY

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park is fast becoming a historic island in a sea of modern development and change. Attempts to protect the park's historic setting and resolve surrounding development issues at the local level have to date proved unsuccessful. Continued development pressures and concern for nationally significant resources evolved into congressional action in 1988, authorizing the Park Service to study lands adjacent to the park. This special boundary study's purpose is to analyze significant cultural and scenic lands outside the current boundary that are integral to the park and to identify methods for protecting these lands.

## ALTERNATIVES UNDER CONSIDERATION

Three possible alternative futures are considered in this environmental assessment and are presented in depth in the "Alternative Futures" section of this newsletter. To summarize, the three alternatives are as follows: A – Continued private ownership of all lands surrounding the park, B – Public ownership of those surrounding lands that contain significant resources, and C – Mixed private and public ownerships of those surrounding lands that contain significant resources.

## AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The primary environmental components that would be affected by implementing any of the three alternatives are the cultural and scenic resources, which have been described in the previous "Resource Areas" section. The protection of these resources is a primary concern of this

study. Other resources that have not yet been described but which have been identified by the Park Service as being of concern in this study include rare plant and animal species, wetlands, floodplains, and agricultural lands; these other resources are described below. The next section, "Environmental Impacts," describes what may happen under the alternatives to these cultural and scenic resources as well as what may happen to these other important resources.

Nineteen species of federal, state, or park concern have been recorded in and near the park and resource areas – 16 plant species and 3 invertebrates. The following table summarizes the status and existing information for each species.



Table 1. Species of Federal, State, or Park Concern

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status*	A population in the park?	A population near or in a resource area?	Scientific Name	Common Name	Status*	A population in the park?	A population near or in a resource area?
<i>Arabia shortii</i>	prairie rockcress	END(p) MD	yes	unknown	<i>Hibiscus militaris</i>	a large mallow	RARE WV	unknown	yes
<i>Asplenium pinnatifidum</i>	pinnate spleenwort	END(p) MD	unknown	historic**	<i>Oryzopsis racemosa</i>	black-fruited mountain-rice	THR(p) MD	yes	unknown
<i>Asplenium stotleri</i>	Stotlers spleenwort	RARE Park	historic**	unknown	<i>Panax quiquefolium</i>	N. American ginseng	RARE Park	yes	unknown
<i>Caecidotea pricei</i>	a cave invertebrate	RARE WV	unknown	yes	<i>Paronychia virginica</i>	none	RARE Park	yes	unknown
<i>Carex rugosperma</i>	umbel sedge	RARE MD	yes	unknown	<i>Ptilimnium nodosum</i>	harperella	END Federal	historic**	unlikely**
<i>Celastrina eбенina</i>	ebony blue butterfly	RARE MD	unknown	yes	<i>Pycnanthemum torrei</i>	none	RARE Park	yes	unknown
<i>Cheilanthes tomentosa</i>	a fern	RARE Park	yes	unknown	<i>Ruellia strepens</i>	a wild petunia	THR(p) MD	yes	unknown
<i>Chinoea primitiva</i>	a wingless crane fly	RARE Park	yes	unknown	<i>Trifolium stoloniferum</i>	running buffalo clover	END Federal	historic**	unknown
<i>Erigenia bulbosa</i>	harbinger-of-spring	RARE VA	yes	unknown	*END/THR/RARE = Endangered/Threatened/Rare; (p) = proposed; Federal/MD/WV/Park = federally listed/listed in Maryland/listed in West Virginia/rare for the park				
<i>Erythronium albidum</i>	white trout-lily	RARE VA	yes	unknown	**historic = there is a historical record for the species in the area; unlikely = recent searches for the species have been unsuccessful				
<i>Floerkea proserpinacoides</i>	false - mermaid weed	RARE VA	yes	unknown					

Floodplains in the resource areas include those along the Potomac River in the Jefferson View and the U.S. Armory resource areas, as well as those along the south branch of Elk Run in the School House Ridge–Bolivar Heights resource area.

Wetlands are confined to two of the resource areas – a 1-acre pond near the Unseld farm in the Maryland Heights resource area and the Potomac River shores and a 1/2-acre pond in the Jefferson View resource area.

A portion of the School House Ridge–Bolivar Heights resource area is classified as "good agricultural land (classes I-IV)" by the Soil Conservation Service (U.S. Department of Agriculture). Portions of the Jefferson View and Maryland Heights resource areas in Maryland are classified as "productive" agricultural land (classes II-III).

One site that may contain hazardous materials has been identified in the School House Ridge–Bolivar Heights resource area. Recent analyses of contaminated soil from this known site (a pesticide storage shed in a proposed subdivision) proved inconclusive. Other sites with hazardous materials may exist in other resource areas.

For sites known to contain hazardous material or with a history of land use that indicates a potential for hazardous materials (e.g., landfills, industrial sites, known deposition sites), the following actions would be taken prior to federal acquisition in fee or acquisition of interest in the land: (1) the area would be surveyed to determine the presence, type, and extent of contamination, and (2) the legally and financially responsible parties would be identified and cleanup would be completed under the regulations of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Park Service

would work with the EPA and state and local agencies to ensure that hazardous materials are properly removed and disposed of by the responsible parties.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES

IMPACT TOPIC	ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C
IMPACTS ON CULTURAL RESOURCES	<p>Unavoidable loss of a nationally significant Civil War battlefield would occur due to imminent residential development and expected commercial development. The historic scene and cultural landscape of the Harpers Ferry Battle would be significantly impaired. The remains of the U.S. Armory and the original site of John Brown's fort could be impacted by changes in railroad use. Civil War archeological resources could be irretrievably lost in the Maryland Heights and Loudoun Heights resource areas and in Bolivar Heights from developments or other human disturbances. Additional modern developments on the north side of the Shenandoah River bridge would negatively impact the cultural landscape as seen by visitors entering the park from the east.</p>	<p>A nationally significant Civil War battlefield would be preserved in perpetuity through federal acquisition of the site. The remains of the U.S. Armory and the original site of John Brown's fort would be preserved and interpreted as part of the story of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Civil War archeological resources in the Maryland Heights and Loudoun Heights resource areas and on Bolivar Heights would be protected from human disturbances. Visitors entering the park from the east, crossing the Shenandoah River bridge, would view a cultural landscape unencumbered by modern developments – a view similar to that which greeted travelers in the mid 19th century.</p>	<p>A nationally significant Civil War battlefield would be preserved through protection from inappropriate land uses. The remains of the U.S. Armory and the original site of John Brown's fort would be preserved through similar protection. Civil War archeological resources in the Maryland Heights and Loudoun Heights resource areas and on Bolivar Heights would be protected from land-disturbing activities. Visitors entering the park from the east, crossing the Shenandoah River bridge, would view a cultural landscape unencumbered by modern developments – a view similar to that which greeted travelers in the mid 19th century.</p>



**IMPACT  
TOPIC****ALTERNATIVE A****ALTERNATIVE B****ALTERNATIVE C****IMPACTS ON  
SCENIC  
RESOURCES**

The downriver view from Jefferson Rock would be additionally altered from the natural scenic beauty first proclaimed by Thomas Jefferson in 1783. Possible modern developments would further compromise the natural scene in the Maryland Heights and Park Approach resource areas and would be incompatible with the protection of the aesthetic values of the park. Communication towers or other ridgeline structures built on Loudoun Heights would be readily visible from the park and would significantly impact the historic setting and natural scene. The pastoral setting enjoyed by westbound travelers entering West Virginia's Shenandoah Valley would be compromised by modern commercial and residential developments.

The downriver view from Jefferson Rock would be preserved in its generally natural and uncluttered current condition. No incompatible modern developments would be constructed in the Maryland Heights or Park Approach resource areas, and communication towers and other incompatible structures could not be built in the Loudoun Heights resource area, thus ensuring that the historic setting and natural scene of the park would be protected. The pastoral setting of the entrance to the Shenandoah Valley would be preserved for the enjoyment of future travelers on US 340.

The downriver view from Jefferson Rock would be preserved in its generally natural and uncluttered current condition. No incompatible modern developments would be constructed in the Maryland Heights or Park Approach resource areas that would visually disrupt these areas. Communication towers and other incompatible structures would not be built in the Loudoun Heights resource area, ensuring that the historic setting and natural scene of the park would be protected. The pastoral setting of the entrance to the Shenandoah Valley would also be preserved through appropriate land protection methods.

IMPACT TOPIC	ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C
<b>IMPACTS ON LOCAL ECONOMY</b>	An economic study examining the effects on the local tax base and the effects on the tourist economy is currently underway. This study will be completed in early December.	As under alternative A, the economic study examining the effects on the local tax base and the effects on the tourist economy is currently underway and will be completed in early December.	As under alternative A, the economic study examining the effects on the local tax base and the effects on the tourist economy is currently underway and will be completed in early December.
<b>IMPACTS ON RARE, THREATENED, OR ENDANGERED SPECIES</b>	For most of the species of concern, whether or not a population exists in any given resource area is unknown. It is therefore not possible to address potential impacts to individual species or populations. However, given the number of species involved and the paucity of distribution data, it is reasonable to assume that the level of new construction projected by this alternative would adversely impact some populations.	Given the lack of resource area-specific data, it is not possible to address potential impacts to individual species or populations. However, a population inventory would be completed in the future on lands protected under this alternative. All identified populations would be protected from incompatible uses and developments.	Given the lack of resource area-specific data, it is not possible to address potential impacts to individual species or populations. However, a population inventory would be completed in the future on lands protected under this alternative. All identified populations would be protected from incompatible uses and developments.

<b>IMPACT TOPIC</b>	<b>ALTERNATIVE A</b>	<b>ALTERNATIVE B</b>	<b>ALTERNATIVE C</b>
<b>IMPACTS ON FLOODPLAINS AND WETLANDS</b>	Under this alternative, the floodplains and wetlands in the U.S. Armory, Jefferson View, Maryland Heights, and School House Ridge-Bolivar Heights resource areas could be impacted by inappropriate private developments.	Most of the floodplain and wetland areas in the U.S. Armory, Jefferson View, Maryland Heights, and School House Ridge-Bolivar Heights resource areas would be protected through federal acquisition.	Most of the floodplains and wetlands in the U.S. Armory, Jefferson View, Maryland Heights, and School House Ridge-Bolivar Heights resource areas would be protected through the park's revised land protection plan and the procurement of necessary federal interests to ensure that these areas were not inappropriately developed.
<b>IMPACTS ON AGRICUL- TURAL LANDS</b>	Most of the agricultural lands would be lost to other uses.	Federal acquisition of agricultural land in the School House Ridge-Bolivar Heights resource area would protect these lands from nonagricultural uses. Agricultural lands in the Jefferson View and Maryland Heights resource areas would also be acquired and thus protected from nonagricultural uses. All such acquired farmlands would probably be leased to local farmers for continued agricultural use.	The agricultural land in the School House Ridge-Bolivar Heights resource area and in the Jefferson View and Maryland Heights resource areas would be protected from nonagricultural uses through appropriate protection methods. These lands would probably continue to be used for agriculture.





Downriver view from Jefferson Rock



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**Harpers Ferry National Historical Park**



fold here

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

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