



HARPERS FERRY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

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special boundary study

june 1989 newsletter

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United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
HARPERS FERRY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
P.O. BOX 100
HARPERS FERRY, MARYLAND 21740

Dear Public Officials
Landowners
Civil War Enthusiasts
Tourism Officials
Park and Rural Landscape Preservationists
Park Visitors
Local Residents

The National Park Service welcomes your participation in the study.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park and the surrounding landscape leads to perpetuating the rural setting surrounding the park, avoiding traffic gridlock, and the disappearance of a quality of life in Harpers Ferry.

The future is now. Its consequences will be brought about by decisions that determine if the educational, recreational, inspirational, and scenic values of the park will be carried into the 21st century. Change is inevitable; therefore, a boundary study will be completed by December of 1995.

Donald W. Campbell

Superintendent

Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

LEWIS AND CLARK NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

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WV 25425



in this special boundary study.

adjacent to it are at a crossroads. One road
park. The other road leads to urban sprawl,
life that people have come to enjoy at Harpers

into focus by this study. The road taken will
al, and tourism values of the park will endure
main only choices. It is anticipated that the



In 1988, Congress authorized a special boundary study to address land issues brought about by increasing suburban sprawl adjacent to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. The purpose of the boundary study is to analyze significant historic and scenic lands that are integral to the park and to identify methods for protecting those lands.

In February 1989 the National Park Service assigned a team of planners to begin work on the boundary study. As a first step in planning, the team held a public workshop on March 11 in Leetown, West Virginia, to gather ideas and opinions. Approximately 40 people attended the workshop, and more than 50 letters were submitted during the subsequent comment period. Public comments, which are summarized at the end of the newsletter, focused on the scope of the study and what methods should be used to protect significant lands and resources. Based on those comments, the team has identified major issues, study areas, and land protection options to be considered in the boundary study. In the coming months this information will be used to develop strategies to protect lands within the study areas. All actions will be in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act.

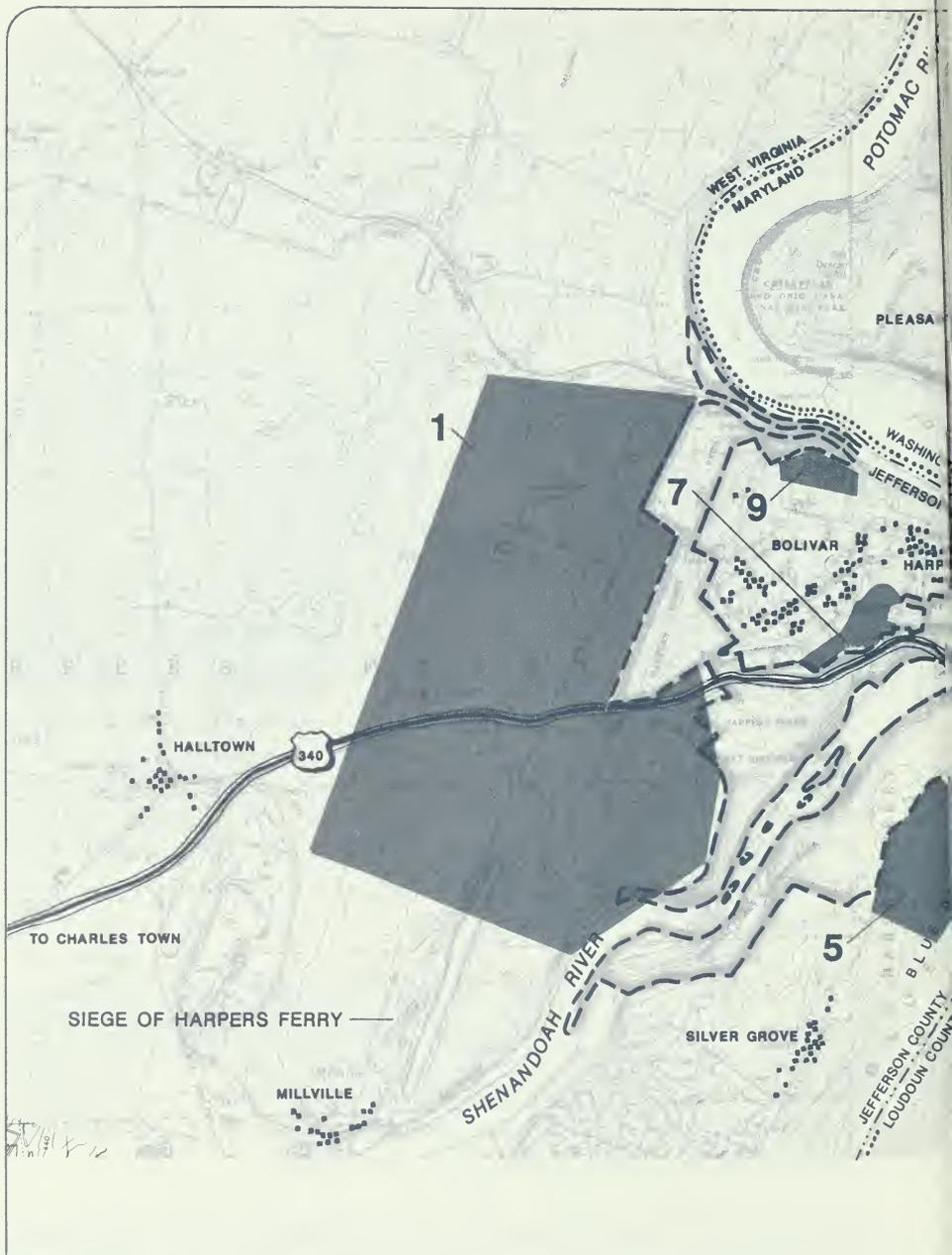


Looking east from School House Ridge

visitation is approaching 1 million and is expected to continue to rise through the next century. Population growth and the influx of tourists have resulted in significant traffic increases. Heavy traffic on Route 340 has required a bypass, now under construction around Charles Town.

In 1988 Jefferson County officials recognized this population explosion and enacted a zoning ordinance – the first in West Virginia. The ordinance defines residential and commercial growth areas in the county, but it is economically based and fails to distinguish between the lands that were significant in Harpers Ferry's history and other lands in the county.

The national historical park is at a crossroads. The knowledge and inspiration it provides to visitors, the positive image it brings to the tri-state region, and the significant role it plays in the regional tourism economy can no longer be taken for granted. Difficult decisions about the park's future lie ahead. When the special boundary study is completed, it will help guide those decisions and shape the park as it moves into the 21st century.



STUDY AREA

--- HARPERS FERRY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK



NORTH



LAND PROTECTION METHODS

The legislation that authorized the Harpers Ferry special boundary study recommended the use of both nonfederal and federal methods to protect nationally significant historic and scenic lands in and near Harpers Ferry. A wide variety of protection methods will be considered in this study, including the following:

Nonfederal Methods

- purchase by land trusts and private not-for-profit organizations
- zoning to protect from incompatible development
- tax incentives for landowners
- private ownership protection

Federal Methods

- scenic or agricultural easements (the federal government acquires specified rights to the land, but the land remains in private ownership)
- purchase by the federal government and sell back to the private individual with restrictions attached to the deed
- lease of land to the federal government (the land remains in private ownership)
- lease back (the federal government acquires the land and leases it to the private individual)
- cooperative agreements with landowners
- fee acquisition of the land for inclusion within the park



COMMENTS FROM THE MARCH 11, 1989, WORKSHOP

A public workshop was held on March 11, 1989, to begin the planning process. Following an introduction by Superintendent Campbell and a slide presentation on the two initial study areas, the 40+ participants separated into six work groups to discuss issues and concerns relating to land areas adjacent to the park. The discussions focused on the School House Ridge battlefield area and the downriver viewshed from Jefferson Rock, but other areas deserving study were identified during the workshop and in subsequent letters. Each work group prepared a list of concerns, which were then presented to all participants. Comments and concerns generally fell into three broad categories.

Protection

Protection of the historical and scenic qualities of the study areas was seen as a positive action. Comments included the following:

- Zoning can protect but it is not permanent.
- Consider cooperative agreements.
- Easements are not usually enforced.
- Existing owners should be protected (i.e., lifetime tenancy).
- The study areas are worth saving.
- Deal with the old orchard site immediately.
- Encourage new zoning categories to protect the land.
- Consider lease purchase.
- Consider fee purchase.
- Consider controlled development (deed covenants).
- Consider buffer zones.
- Consider scenic easements.
- Begin the application process for landmark status.
- Local organizations should advocate preservation.
- National support is needed.



FUTURE ACTION



The next step in planning for the boundary study is to evaluate the importance of the study areas and suggest alternatives for their protection. We hope to complete this work and have a draft document ready for review by the fall of this year. As the study progresses, we will keep you informed through press releases and public meetings and will provide opportunities for you to comment.

Following is a schedule of study tasks:

Task	Estimated Completion Date
Draft study to public	October 1989
Public workshop	October 1989
Close of comments on draft study	November 1989
Final study to public	January 1990

We plan to meet with individual landowners in the study areas this summer to review the study and discuss protection options. Meetings can be arranged by contacting park resource management specialist Bill Hebb at (304) 535-6371, ext. 6338. A park representative will meet privately with you.

Thank you for your interest in this project. Your continued involvement in the study effort is important to its success. If you have any additional comments, please send them to

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Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
P.O. Box 65
Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 25425



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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HARPERS FERRY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
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