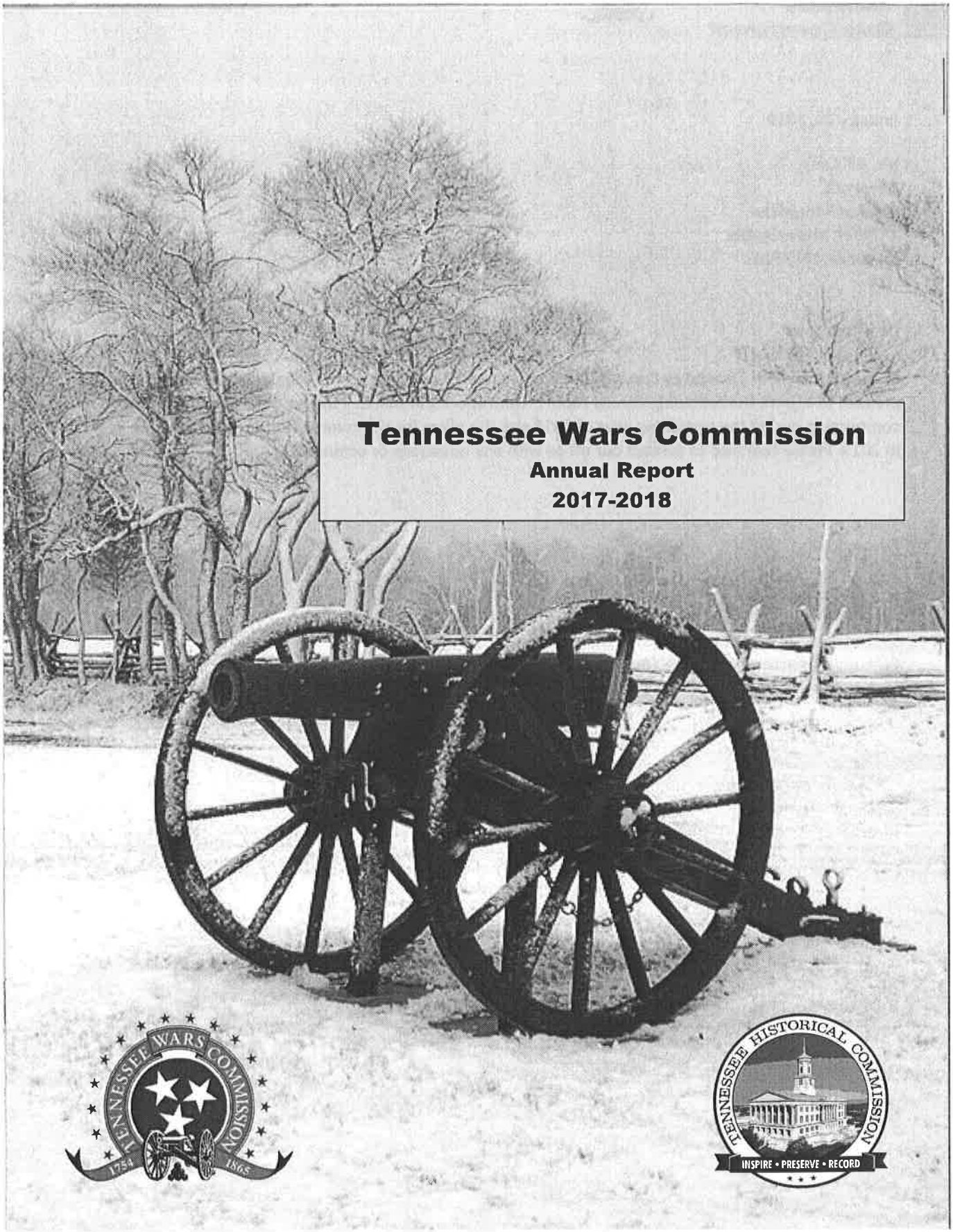

Tennessee Wars Commission

Annual Report

2017-2018

TENNESSEE WARS COMMISSION 1754 1865

TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

INSPIRE • PRESERVE • RECORD

TN Tennessee State Government

Background of the Tennessee Wars Commission

The Tennessee General Assembly enacted legislation in April, 1994 creating the Tennessee Wars Commission, which is administratively attached to the Tennessee Historical Commission.

The duties of the Wars Commission include the coordination of planning, preservation, and promotion of structures, buildings, sites, and battlefields of Tennessee associated with the French and Indian War (1754-1763), American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), War of 1812 (1812-1815), Mexican-American War (1846-1848), and the American Civil War (1861-1865). It is additionally charged with acquiring or providing funds for the acquisition of battlefields, cemeteries, and other properties associated with the above conflicts.

The business of the Wars Commission is conducted at the regular meetings of the Historical Commission. One Historical Commission staff member, Timothy Hyder, works on behalf of the Wars Commission as Director of Programs, and reports to the assistant director for state programs for the Historical Commission. The Wars Commission is statutorily required to provide a yearly report on activities to the Governor and to the speakers of the respective bodies of the general assembly.

Grant Funding

The Wars Commission administers two separate grant funds in furtherance of the mission to plan, preserve, and promote the structures, buildings, sites, and battlefields of Tennessee. The Tennessee Civil War Sites Preservation Fund, which provides matching funding solely for the acquisition of battlefield land in Tennessee, and the Tennessee Wars Commission Grant Fund, which grants funds for a wide variety of projects which further the Wars Commission's mission.

This year marks the first in which grant applications for both the Tennessee Wars Commission grants and the Tennessee Civil War Sites Preservation Fund grants will be completely digital. Over the past several months the Wars Commission has worked closely with TDEC's digital systems to develop the platform in which potential grantees can review and submits their applications. Applications will also be reviewed and scored digitally, and if successful, their grant contracts will be generated mainly from the digital platform. This should greatly decrease the processing time for grants and streamline the process by which grantees are reimbursed.

Tennessee Civil War Sites Preservation Fund

This grant program, begun in 2013, is a key source of matching funding for the preservation of properties associated with the 38 most significant Civil War sites in Tennessee. Additionally, grants can assist in funding the acquisition and protection of Underground Railroad sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, or eligible for designation as a National Historic Landmark.

Applicants must be a 501©3 non-profit, and only projects associated with the 38 most significant Civil War battlefields in the state (as defined by the National Park Service report) or Underground Railroad sites are eligible. After review, the applications will be scored, rated and ranked by staff members of the THC and TWC. The full Historical Commission then have final voting approval of eligible grant projects. The grants will pay a 50 percent match and the grant recipient must provide the remaining 50 percent of the cost as matching funds from a non-state source.

Portion of the battlefield at Brown's Ferry/Wauhatchie

The Tennessee Wars Commission/Tennessee Historical Commission granted a total of $697,500 to the three projects listed below that will preserve nearly 15.5 acres of critical Civil War battlefield lands. Final processing and reimbursement have been done for FY 17-18's TCWSPF grant projects at Fort Donelson and Chattanooga. A total of $45,000 of grant funds has been distributed, with the remaining approved funding for Franklin still in the contract and processing stages.

- Gold Tract, Dover, Stewart County.
  This project will acquire one (1) parcel, consisting of 11.18± acres. The property is located near the southwestern portion of the Fort Donelson National Battlefield and was the site of troop movements and combat during the Battle of Fort Donelson, February 11-16, 1862.

- Mohr Tract, Chattanooga, Hamilton County.
  This project will acquire one (1) parcel, consisting of 3.61± acres. The project is located at the northern portion of the Chattanooga (Brown's Ferry) Battlefield and was the site of troop movements of the 23rd Kentucky Infantry, U.S.A. during the Battle of Wauhatchie, October 27, 1863.

- Spivey Tract, Franklin, Williamson County
  This project will acquire one (1) parcel, consisting of .7± acres. The property is located just south of the Federal entrenchment line at the Carter family's farm and lies west of, and adjacent to, Columbia Pike in the city of Franklin. During the Battle of Franklin on November 30, 1864 it was over this tract that multiple Confederate brigades of Brown's Division charged against hastily entrenched Federal troops and were repulsed repeatedly, taking frightening casualties in the process.

The application deadline for the Tennessee Civil War Site Preservation Grant Fund has now closed, with at least five applications submitted. The grant program, begun in 2013, is a key source of matching funding for the preservation of properties associated with the 38 most significant Civil War sites in Tennessee. Additionally, grants can assist in funding the acquisition and protection of Underground Railroad sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, or eligible for designation as a National Historic Landmark. The amount of funds available for grants in Tennessee this year is expected to be over $2 million. This represents the largest amount of funds ever available for TCWSPF grants, due to the growth of the State's Real Estate Transfer tax. Applications will be reviewed and scored by the Wars Commission and Historical Commission, with the scoring and recommendations for funding presented to the Commission for approval at the February meeting.

Tennessee Wars Commission Grant Fund

Since 1994, this grant program has funded over one hundred different projects preserving, protecting, and interpreting the military heritage of Tennessee and Tennesseans. In the last grant cycle the Wars Commission granted nearly $84,000 for the following three projects:

- $3,350 to provide for living history supplies and signage for interpretation relating to the role of Civil War guerilla fighting in and around Alvin C. York State Historic Park.

- $40,000 to provide funding for the supplies, materials, and labor required to build a statue to the Tennessee Volunteer at the site of Camp Blount in Fayetteville, Tennessee.

- $40,000 to provide for the purchase of caissons and carriages on which to mount Johnsonville State historic Park's replica Civil War-era cannons.

The Tennessee Wars Commission began accepting grant applications for the Tennessee Wars Commission FY-2019 grant program that provides funding to protect and interpret Tennessee's historic military sites ranging from the French and Indian War through the American Civil War era. Grant applications were accepted until November 15th. The largest number of applications to date have been returned to the Wars Commission. Applications will be scored and funds distributed to successful applicants.

Replica cannons on the Franklin battlefield

Civic and Governmental Engagement

- The Tennessee Wars Commission went before the Joint Government Operations Committee on September 26th for a Sunset Hearing. The Wars Commission was extended by the JGOC for another six years, until FY 2025. This hearing also addressed the aforementioned need for an annual report by the Wars Commission, and members were informed that the Wars Commission would be providing these reports on an annual basis stating in January of 2019.

- As part of TDEC's report to State of Tennessee Real Estate Management, the Wars Commission compiled a report detailing the land holdings in which the Tennessee Historical Commission, through the TWC, has either ownership or a conservation easement.

- While the Wars Commission was in no way involved with the decisions regarding Confederate monumentation in Tennessee, a significant amount of the Director of Program's time during the last year was spent clarifying this fact to both the public and the media. Due to the perception of the Wars Commission's mission, this office received a significant volume of inquiries requesting interviews, statements, and other interactions which needed to be processed and directed towards the appropriate state employee for comment. The Wars Commission did, in response to

numerous requests, digitize the state-wide survey of war-related monuments in order to better disseminate this information to the public and media outlets.

Interpretation and Education

- Director of Programs Hyder and Executive Director Patrick McIntyre visited the Camp Blount historic site in Fayetteville on September 12, 2018 with other state and local officials for the official presentation of the $500,000 direct appropriation from the Tennessee General Assembly to the City of Fayetteville, which administers this state property under an agreement with the Tennessee Historical Commission. This money will be used to fund the work outlined in the site's Master Plan produced under the direction of the Wars Commission, including grading trails, creating parking space, and other infrastructure projects necessary for opening the site to the public fully and interpreting Camp Blount's important place in history. After the presentation a meeting was held with stakeholders to review site plans and emphasize the preservation priorities for the site.

The Wars Commission continues to advocate for the preservation and protection of Fort Negley in Nashville (**pictured**, at left) and consult on future plans for the stabilization and interpretation of both the 1860s fort and the later work done by the WPA in the 1930s.

- The Wars Commission is serving in an advisory capacity for the data being gathered by a team of historians for the Tennessee Civil War Battlefield Preservation Plan. This Plan is attempting to catalog and describe every Civil War site in the state of Tennessee with the end goal of a comprehensive preservation plan ranging from digital interpretation to acquisition.

- The Wars Commission will begin inspecting and signing all battlefield conservation easements during this winter and spring. Currently the Tennessee Historical Commission holds the conservation easements on over 700 acres of battlefield property in five counties throughout Tennessee. Inspections ensure that the preservation clauses and conditions of these easements are being met by the property owners, as well as providing an opportunity to photograph baseline conditions at some of the more recently acquired easement tracts. Metal signage is being designed that designates these properties as protected under easement by the State and THC and will serve as a deterrent to vandalism and as a reminder that work on easement properties must be approved by THC prior to commencement.