



Photo: The "Pioneer Cabin" at the Camp Blount Historic Site, War of 1812 Muster Grounds.

Tennessee Wars Commission Annual Report, December 2025



TENNESSEE WARS COMMISSION

The Tennessee General Assembly enacted legislation in 1994 forming the Tennessee Wars Commission (TWC), a division of the Tennessee Historical Commission (THC), to address the rapid disappearance of military heritage sites across the state. This was in response to the formation of the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission (CWSAC) by Congress and the Secretary of the Interior in 1990 due to national concerns over the increasing loss of Civil War battlefields and sites. With its establishment, the Wars Commission was given the authority and responsibility to preserve heritage sites and battlefields for the following conflicts: the French and Indian War (1754-1763), American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), War of 1812 (1812-1815), Mexican-American War (1846-1848), and the Civil War (1861-1865).

Since its establishment 31 years ago, TWC has helped acquire and permanently protect over 8,100 acres of historic properties, including the ca. 1803 Browns Ferry Tavern in Hamilton County associated with both the Civil War and the Trail of Tears, and the US Colored Troop-defended earthwork fortifications at the National Register-listed Fort Redmond Historic Site in Robertson County. To date, TWC grant funding has supported over 128 different projects that research, interpret, protect, and preserve Tennessee’s military heritage. These projects have included funding archaeological excavations to locate undocumented Confederate graves at the state-owned Parkers Crossroads Battlefield in Henderson County, the creation of the film, *Tide Turners - 13th US Colored Infantry*, that focuses on the bravery and sacrifice of the US Colored Troops in Davidson County, and the construction of the Foundation Document, a gold standard planning manuscript that will guide the state-owned Camp Blount Historic Site in Lincoln County for years to come.

The Director of Programs, a position held by Ms. Nina Scall, works to fulfill the program’s mission by funding grants, through civic and governmental engagement, education and interpretation, and by way of conservation efforts. The THC Interim Executive Director, Miranda Christy Montgomery, serves as the Interim Executive Director of the TWC. The business of the Tennessee Wars Commission is conducted at the regular meetings of the Tennessee Historical Commission.

Grant Funding

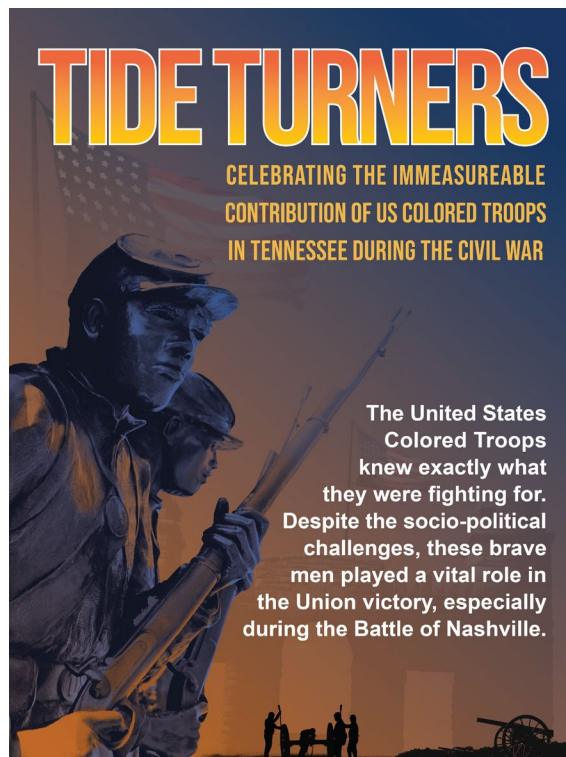
TWC administers two grant funds, the Wars Commission Grant Fund (WCGF), which supports the Wars Commission’s preservation initiatives by funding projects that research, interpret, and conserve Tennessee’s military heritage, and the Civil War Sites Preservation Grant Fund (CWSPF), for the preservation and restoration of Civil War battlefields in Tennessee.

Wars Commission Grant Fund:

The Wars Commission Grant Fund is designed with a broad scope in mind, allowing for a wide range of project types focused on preserving Tennessee’s rich military heritage. Any individual, institution, organization, or government body within Tennessee’s diverse communities is eligible to apply. Although matching funds are not a requisite, contributions are favorable. This year’s grant funds, totaling \$114,500.00, were awarded to four applicants during the 2025 fiscal year. The successful applicants and their projects are as follows:

1. Grainger County Government, Grainger County, “Veterans Island Park Master Plan.”

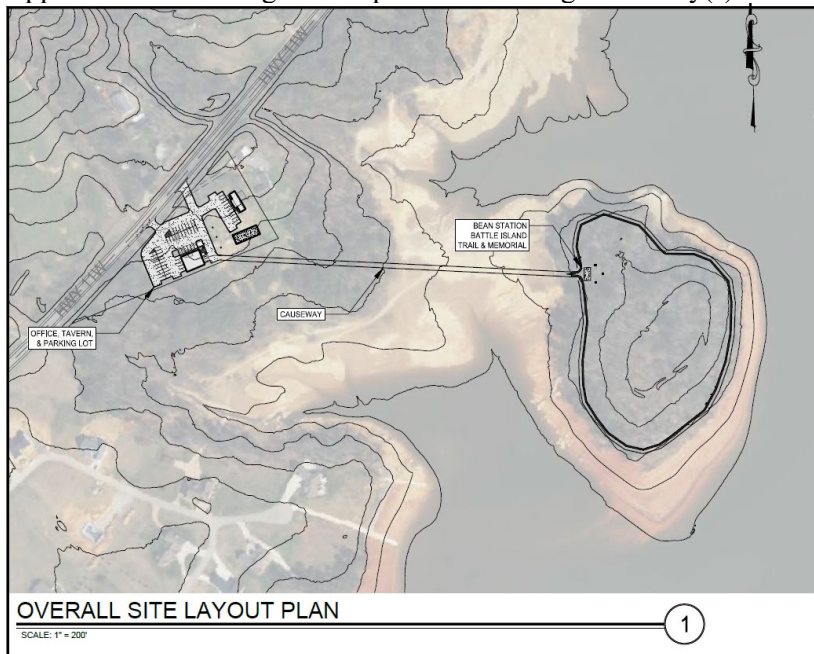
The construction of the Cherokee Dam in 1941 significantly impacted the 1863 Bean Station Battlefield;



Tide Turners Movie Poster

however, due to the topography, Breastworks Hill, which contains the Civil War earthworks, remains intact. Grainger County was awarded \$50,000.00 in grant funds to hire a cultural resource management and engineering firm to develop a master plan that outlines the overall vision for the proposed public history site at Breastworks Island.

The planning document will phase the expansive project, provide guidance on regulations and permitting, identify funding opportunities, etc. The individual components outlined in the proposed master plan will contribute to the protection, interpretation, and public accessibility of the Civil War battlefield and its earthworks, as well as support research through the required archaeological survey(s).



Proposed Site Plan for the Veterans Island Park Project

2. Madison County Parks and Recreation Department, Madison County, “Delving into Salem Cemetery, Archaeological Survey.”

On September 11, 2024, Madison County Mayor A.J. Massey officially signed the management agreement, partnering Madison County with the State of Tennessee, greenlighting the planning phases for the new state-owned battlefield park encompassing the 120-acre Yarbro Farms Tract, a 2018-2019 Civil War Sites Preservation Fund land acquisition project.

In consultation with Madison County Parks and Recreation, three big needs were identified for Phase I of the site’s development: an archaeological survey to

understand the site’s physical history, a master plan to help guide preservation and development, and capital projects for the construction of the park. Madison County was awarded \$45,000.00 for the keystone archaeological survey and for the construction of a master plan.

3. City of Parkers Crossroads, Henderson County, “2024 Confederate Graves Identification Project.”

An archaeological survey followed by excavations on November 12, 1993, by Nick Fielder, then State Archaeologist, and Fred Prouty, former TWC Program Director, located the Union graves; however, the Confederate burial site remained unknown. Through continued research, new historical evidence suggested the location of the Confederate burials from the December 31, 1862, Battle of Parkers Crossroads. The City of Parkers Crossroads was awarded \$7,500.00 grant funds to conduct a new geophysical survey, utilizing Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) to image the area of interest. Although the Confederate burials were not located, the survey did delineate the Union Cemetery’s boundaries and uncovered the number of Union soldiers that were interred here. Interpretative signage will be developed to better highlight this history.

4. James K. Polk Memorial Association, Maury County, “Mexican-American War Interactive.”

The James K. Polk Home and Museum conducts home tours, features museum exhibits, hosts lecture series, and offers a range of educational programs. The Memorial Association was awarded \$12,000.00 to expand its

permanent collection to include a dynamic diorama replicating the Battle of Monterrey from the Mexican-American War. Utilizing advanced 3D printing, hand-sculpting, and airbrushing techniques, the diorama will blend precision and artistry to create a visually stunning and durable representation of the battlefield landscape.

The application process for the 2025-2026 Wars Commission grant cycle concluded on November 21, 2025. Projects will be scored and will be presented to the Tennessee Historical Commission board for final approval during the upcoming February 2026 meeting. The Wars Commission Grant Fund has budgeted \$69,700.00 for grants in this cycle.

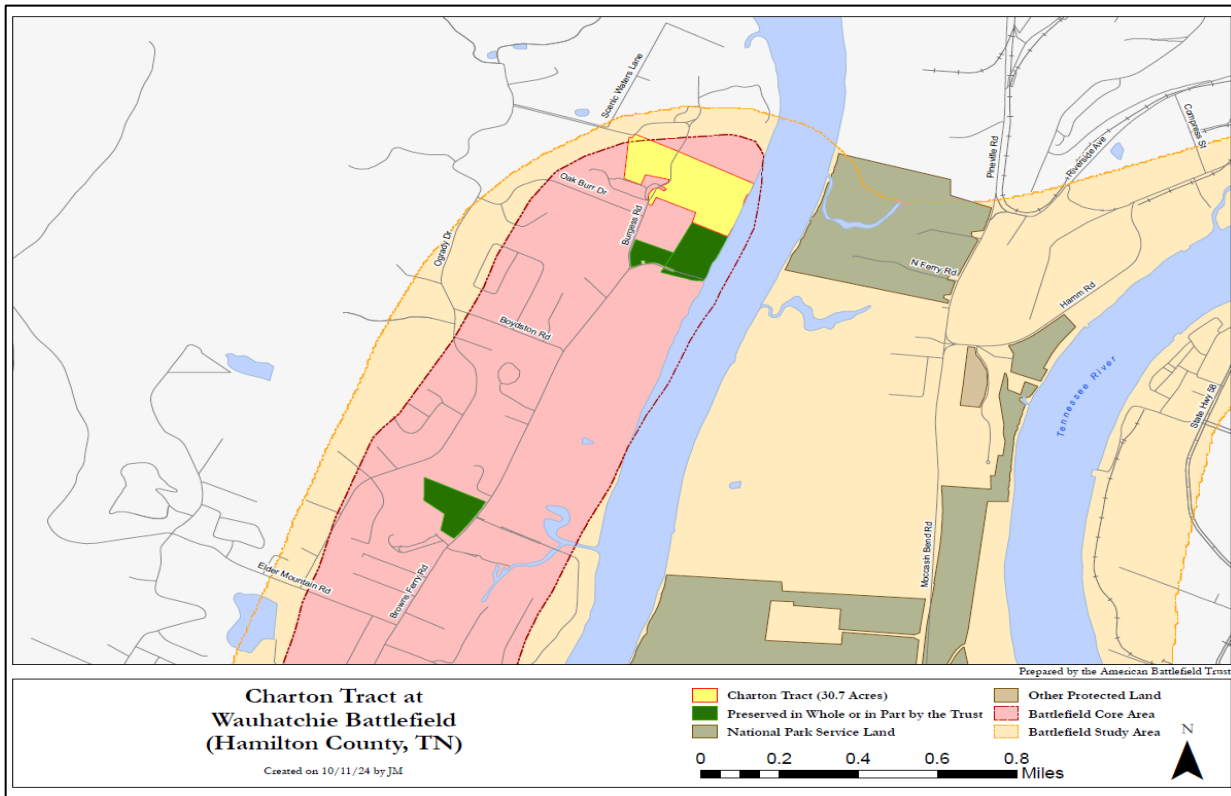
Civil War Sites Preservation Fund:

The Civil War Sites Preservation Fund provides matching funds for the acquisition and preservation of Civil War battlefields. Properties must be associated with the 38 most significant Civil War sites in Tennessee, as defined by the National Park Service. Funds can also assist in the acquisition and protection of Underground Railroad sites eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or eligible for designation as a National Historic Landmark. Applicants must be a 501(c)(3) and must provide a one-to-one match from a nonstate source. Post-acquisition, a conservation easement is placed on the property to be held by the state, protecting the property in perpetuity. Since its conception in 2013, this grant fund has preserved approximately 1,100 acres of battlefield land. In fiscal year 2025, this grant fund awarded \$1,935,250.00 for the acquisition of the following six parcels:

1. The Charton Tract at the Wauhatchie Battlefield, Chattanooga, Hamilton County.

The American Battlefield Trust (ABT) was awarded \$469,500.00 in total grant funds for the acquisition of the Charton Tract. ABT closed on the approximately 30.7-acre tract in the fall of 2025, with additional assistance from the National Park Service’s American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP). Located along Burgess Road and with frontage on the Tennessee River, the property lies within the core area of the Wauhatchie Battlefield. The Charton Tract is adjacent to the Veal Tract (the ferry landing site), a 2016 acquisition, and a short distance from the historic Brown’s Ferry Tavern. This property is associated with the 1838 Cherokee removal, known as the Trail of Tears. Additionally, the Charton tract features a portion of the position that Union troops took upon the ridgeline north of the ferry landing after successfully seizing the area in an amphibious assault on October 27, 1863. A portion of earthworks originating on the Veal Tract extend into the Charton Tract. Long-term preservation plans are to transfer the property to National Park Partners for management.

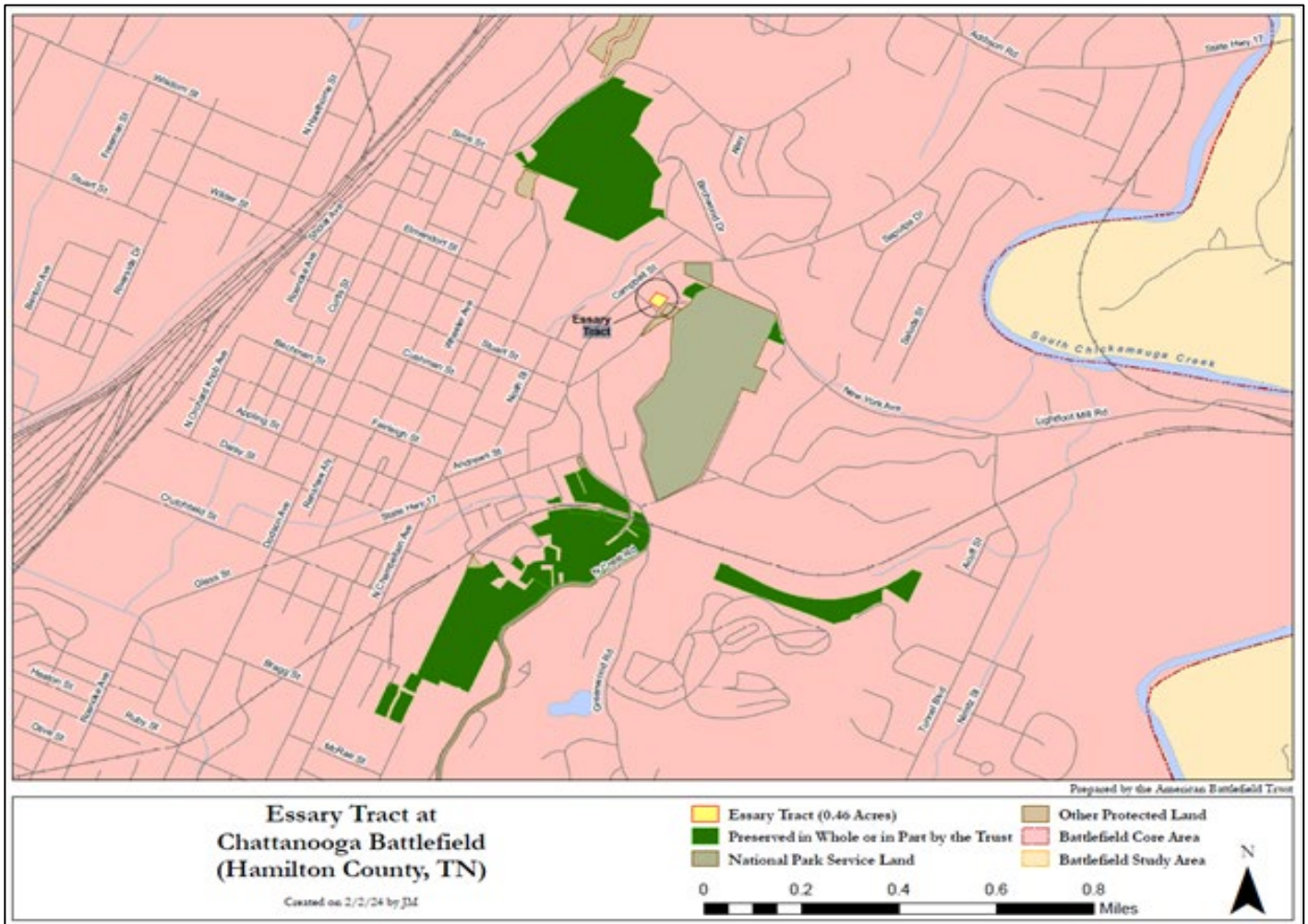
The seizure of Brown’s Ferry and the subsequent construction of a pontoon bridge helped to re-establish the supply line known as the “Cracker Line” and provided an avenue for reinforcements, specifically a portion of William T. Sherman’s Army of the Tennessee. The movement of Sherman’s troops was a major component of Ulysses S. Grant’s plan for the Battle of Chattanooga, November 23-25, 1863.



2. The Essary Tracts at the Chattanooga Battlefield, Chattanooga, Hamilton County.

The Essary Tracts consist of three unimproved parcels totaling approximately 0.46 acres within the battlefield core area. The American Battlefield Trust closed on the property in the fall of 2024, utilizing the \$22,500.00 grant award and with assistance from the American Battlefield Protection Program. The property is adjacent to National Park Service lands and near previously preserved acreage. ABT plans to transfer the property to National Park Partners for long-term management.

After the Battle of Chickamauga in September 1863, Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland withdrew to Chattanooga. Gen. Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee followed and assumed positions outside the city. After restoring their supply lines, the Federals stormed Lookout Mountain on November 24, 1863. Its capture laid the groundwork for an assault on Bragg's position on Missionary Ridge. Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant planned a three-pronged attack. The main effort, spearheaded by the Army of the Cumberland, would charge the center. Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker would assault the Confederate left while Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman and elements of the Army of the Tennessee would attack on the right at Tunnel Hill. On November 25th, Sherman launched his assault, with forces skirmishing across the property.

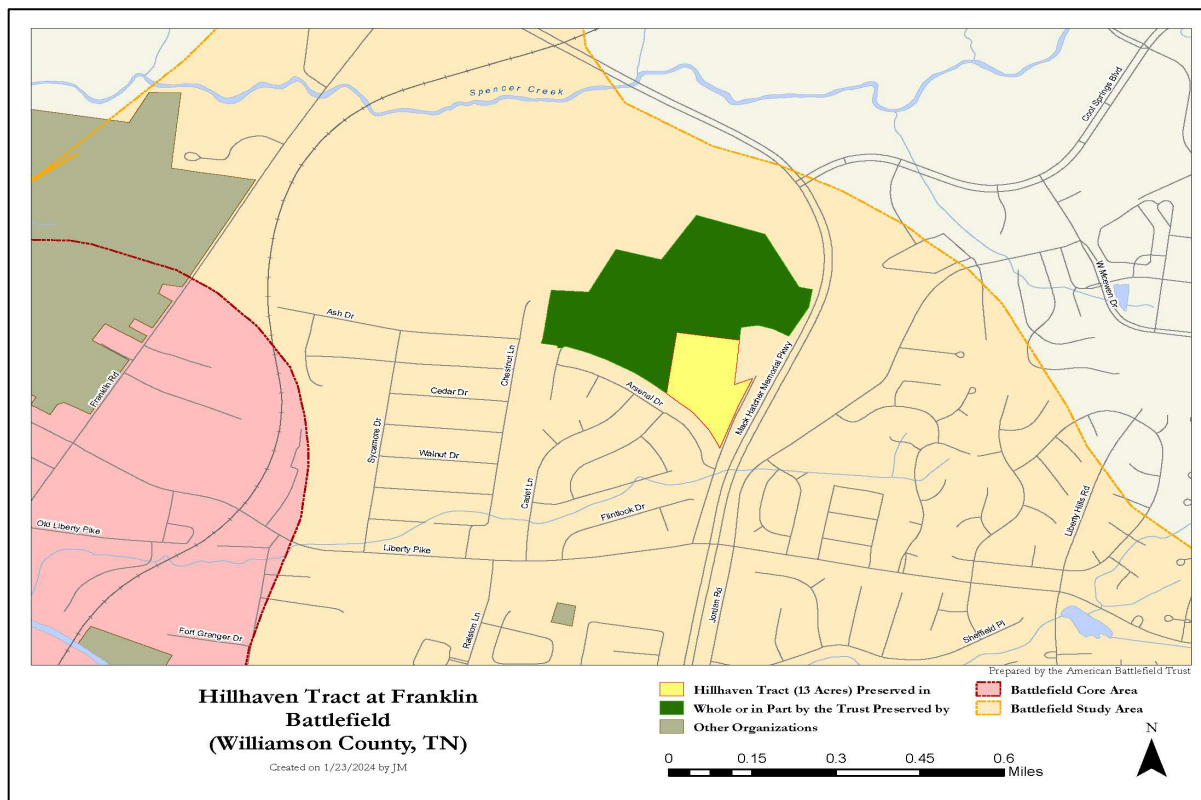


3. The Hillhaven Tract at the Franklin Battlefield, Franklin, Williamson County.

Situated along Hillhaven Lane, the approximately 13.81-acre Hillhaven Tract consists of one parcel in the study area of the Franklin Battlefield. Franklin’s Charge, Inc. was awarded \$1,000,000.00 toward the acquisition and closed on the property in the Summer of 2025. This property is located on the backside of Ropers Knob, which was acquired by preservation partners in 1996 and then by the state. In 2023, the City of Franklin expanded access to the state-owned portion of the site by creating hiking trails, and with this acquisition, Franklin’s Charge plans to fold this property into the City of Franklin’s collection of battlefield parks. The City will incorporate this property into the new Mack Hatcher Parkway Sidewalk Route that will connect with Ropers Knob. This new pedestrian thoroughfare will create greater access to Ropers Knob by including additional trails, interpretative signage, park benches, period fencing, parking, trash cans, and public restroom facilities.

Franklin held a strategic position in the Union’s line of communications and supplies as well as defense. To secure the Union garrison at Franklin, Capt. William Merrill, Chief Engineer for what was the Army of the Cumberland, designed the defenses, and the Pioneer Corps was largely responsible for their construction. Merrill established one of many hilltop fortified signal stations on Ropers Knob and created several detached artillery positions between the knob and Fort Granger. As of May 1863, it was reported that Ropers Knob included a redoubt designed to hold four heavy pieces of artillery, a blockhouse for 60 men, a signal station, two cisterns, and a magazine. The site served as an important communication post with visibility up to six miles in all directions. Ropers Knob relayed important communications to fortifications in Triune to the east and La Vergne

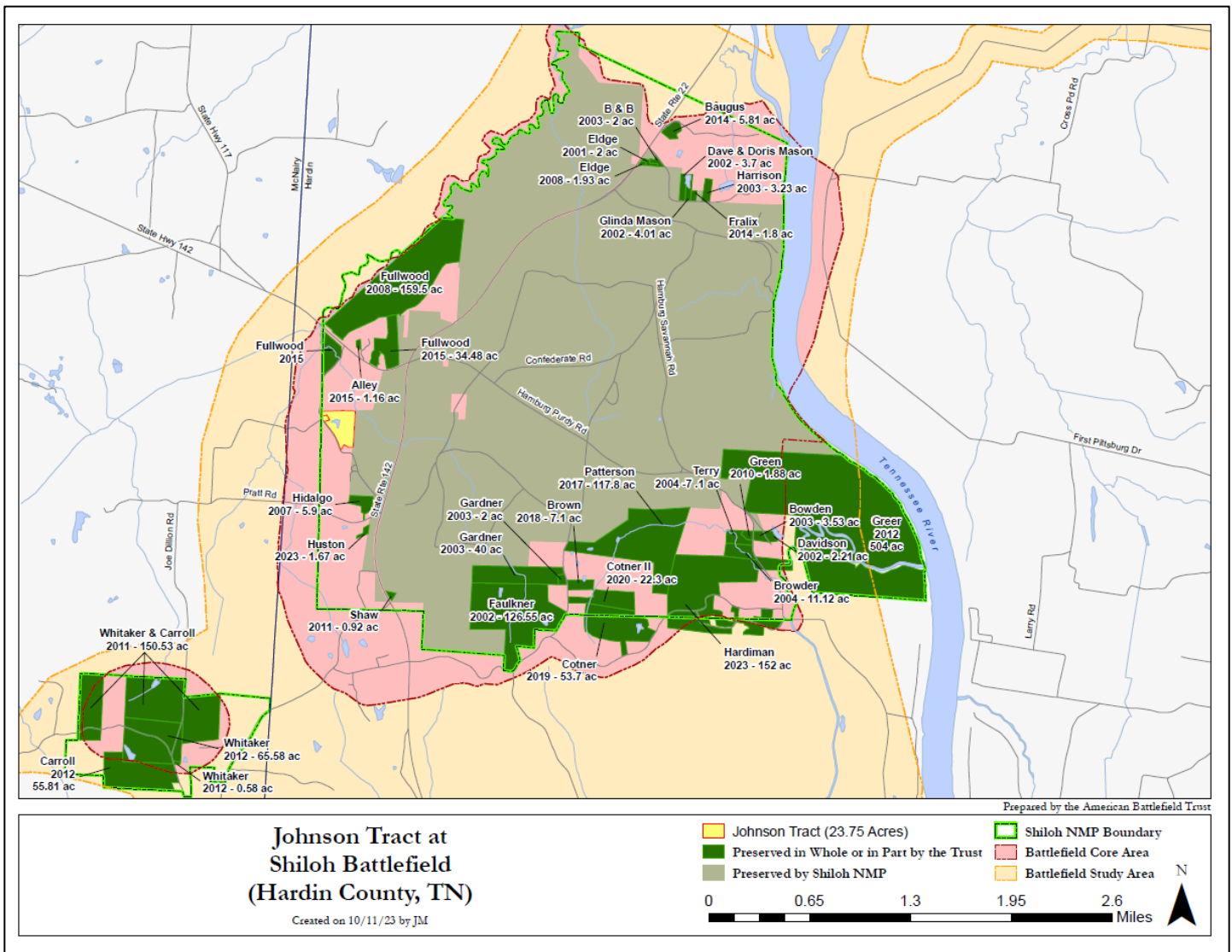
to the northeast, and then to Nashville. Signal stations were vital to the Union military effort as they transmitted information regarding the movement of Confederate troops to Union officers. Communications proved especially important during Confederate Lt. Gen. John Bell Hood's 1864 campaign through Middle Tennessee.



4. The Johnson Tracts at the Shiloh Battlefield, Michie, Hardin County.

Located within the Shiloh National Military Park boundary, the Johnson Tracts are comprised of two parcels totaling approximately 23.75 acres in the core battlefield area. The Johnson Tracts are near the Cotner Tracts and Hardiman Tracts, 2019-2020 and 2023-2024 acquisitions, and are adjacent to other previously preserved acreage. Preservation plans include the expedited transfer of the keystone property to the National Park Service for incorporation into the military park. The ABT was awarded \$187,500.00 in grant funds toward this acquisition.

In February 1862, Brig. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant captured Forts Henry and Donelson, opening the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers to Union movement. Grant's next objective was the rail hub at Corinth, Mississippi. He advanced along the Tennessee River and established a base at Pittsburg Landing. Determined to defend the town, Confederate Gen. Albert S. Johnston attacked Grant's camps on the morning of April 6th. During the early phases of the fighting, Maj. Gen. Braxton Bragg dispatched Col. Preston Pond's brigade to extend the Confederate line to the west. Pond then advanced over the Johnston Tracts to engage Col. John McDowell's brigade north of the property. The Battle of Shiloh was one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War.



5. The Shy's Hill Tract at the Battle of Nashville, Nashville, Davidson County.

The Shy's Hill Tract consists of one restored parcel totaling approximately 1.03 acres within the study area of the Battle of Nashville along Benton Smith Road. This tract is near previously preserved acreage that is today a battlefield park managed by the Battle of Nashville Trust (BoNT). The Trust was awarded \$505,000.00 in grant funds and closed on the property in the Spring of 2024. The parcel will be absorbed into the existing battlefield park.

The Property, formerly known as Compton's Hill, is the most well-known and best-preserved area of the 1864 Battle of Nashville. The Battle of Nashville dismantled the Confederate Army of Tennessee and ended its existence as an effective fighting unit. The smashing Union victory also essentially ended the fighting in the Western theatre.

After completing a flanking movement with both mounted and dismounted cavalry through present-day west Nashville on December 15, 1864, Union troops pushed the Confederate line south and east over a mile. The Confederate army entrenched along what is today Battery Lane. Gen. Thomas launched a failed attack on the right flank on the morning of December 16th. This charge and another in the afternoon were the most significant

assaults of the U.S. Colored Troops during the Civil War. The Union regiments suffered staggering losses in these assaults, but they did force Hood to divert two brigades from his left flank to Peach Orchard Hill, which proved to be a costly mistake. After hours of precise Union artillery shelling of the works on Shy's Hill, Brig. Gen. John McArthur ordered an attack on the summit, which was the weak point of the Confederate line. Union troops ascended the steep slope of Shy's Hill, routing Confederate forces.

Lt. Col. William Shy lost his life in this battle, and Nashville renamed the hill in his honor.



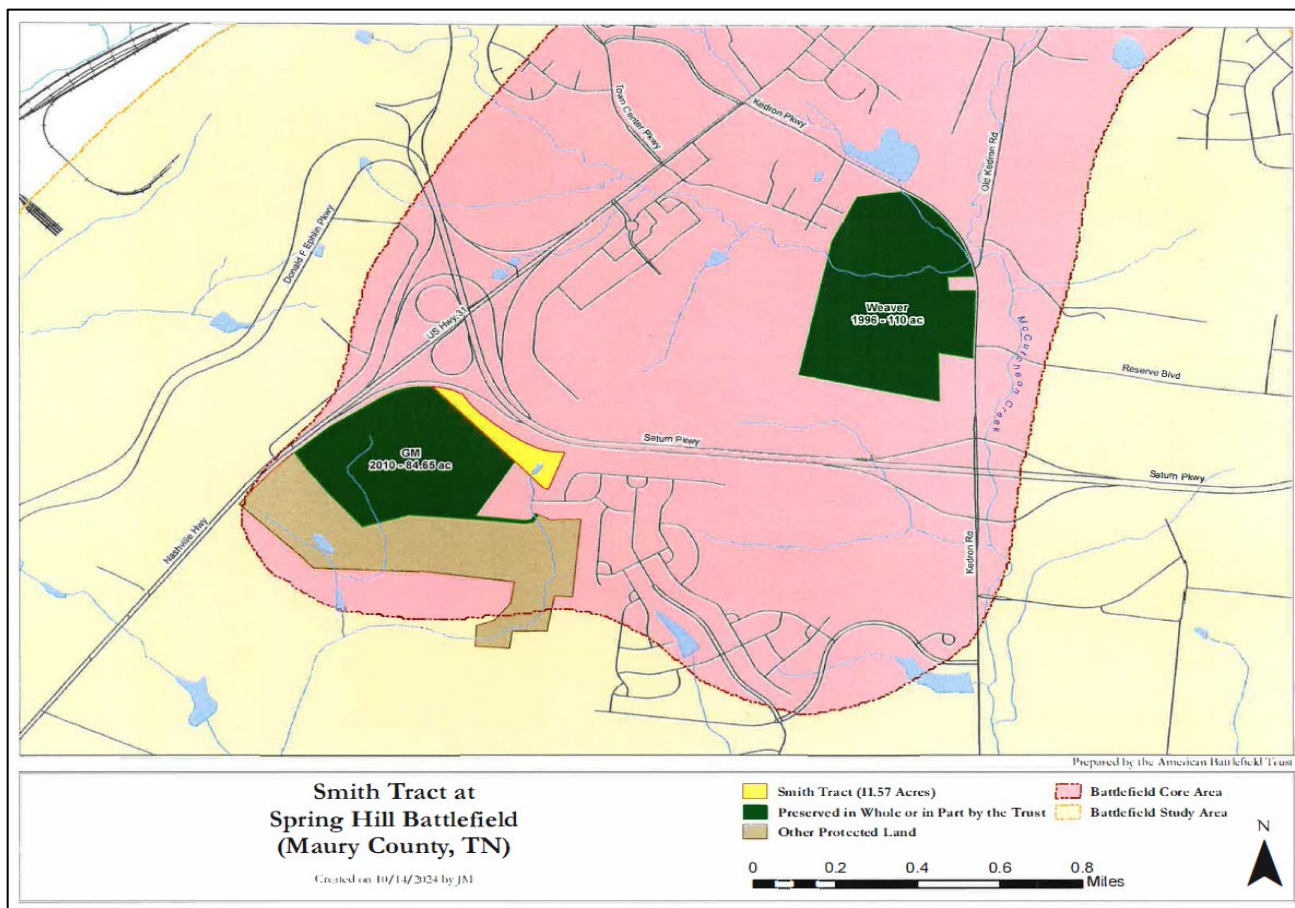
Shy's Hill Tract at the Battle of Nashville in Red, Previously Preserved Property in Yellow

6. The Smith Tract at the Spring Hill Battlefield, Spring Hill, Maury County.

The Smith Tract consists of one 11.57-acre parcel located within the core area of the Spring Hill Battlefield along Saturn Parkway. This parcel is just north of the adjacent 84.65-acre Rippa Villa Plantation and near other previously preserved acreage. The Battle of Franklin Trust (BoFT) plans to retain ownership of the property and incorporate it back into the historic Rippa Villa Plantation landscape, previously known as Cheairs Farm, where its Civil War significance will be interpreted and preserved. The BoFT closed on the property in the Summer of 2025 with the support of a \$95,000.00 grant award and with the assistance of the American Battlefield Protection Program.

By November 21, 1864, Lt. Gen. John Bell Hood's command was across the Tennessee River and eventually confronted Maj. Gen. John Schofield's Union force at Columbia. Rather than attack Schofield head-on, Hood decided to turn the Federal left flank.

Throughout November 28th and into the following day, Hood's troops advanced east and crossed the Duck River. The Confederates marched toward Spring Hill and hoped to secure Columbia Pike, Schofield's main line of retreat. Meanwhile, Schofield inferred Hood's intentions and began pulling his men back toward Spring Hill. The battle began the morning of November 29th as Brig. Gen. George Wagner's division rebuffed an attack by Maj. Gen. Nathan B. Forrest's Confederate cavalry. Fighting continued into the afternoon with skirmishing on the western edge of the tract.



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Civic and Government Engagement

In addition to grants, the Wars Commission’s mission is realized in part through civic and government engagement with advocacy, education, and technical support, remaining a primary focus for the War Commission. Commercial and residential development continues to be the leading threat to Civil War battlefields in Tennessee. This year, the Wars Commission received an unprecedented number of requests from private citizens, preservation groups, and the National Park Service for battlefield preservation assistance. Unfortunately, many of these requests arrived too late, as developers had already developed architectural plans and were collaborating with city planning departments, or had contracts in place with sellers, or were actively working to change zoning to accommodate new development types. In most cases, the Wars Commission has been unable to provide financial assistance due to funding limitations; however, the Director was able to provide advocacy, education, and technical support in the following case studies:

- 100 Acres at the Columbia Battlefield, Maury County:** A private citizen contacted TWC after learning that developers proposed to annex and rezone a 100-acre farm to R3, a moderate to high-density residential designation, enabling the construction of a substantial housing development that would forever alter the historic battlefield and traditional agricultural landscape. The historic Mount Pleasant farmland was originally owned by President James K. Polk and his family. The plantation changed hands but remained a farm with ties to slavery and the Reconstruction era. During the Civil War, the landscape saw fighting related to Confederate Gen. John Bell Hood's 1864 Tennessee campaign, specifically, skirmishing between Confederate Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest and Union Brig. Gen. Horace Capron's troops in November 1864. The Columbia Battlefield is one of the 38 most important battlefields in Tennessee, according to the National Park Service's *Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields*. The property is also directly across from the iconic St. John's Church. This landscape has changed little since the 18th century and retains its historic integrity.



Historical Marker Commemorating the Battle of Columbia

As of early December, the City of Mount Pleasant Commission voted to abandon the rezoning, and Maury County recently placed a moratorium on new residential housing. Concerned citizens hope that these decisions by city and county leaders, coupled with their continued advocacy and support, will create an opportunity for battlefield preservation and interpretation with the development of a park for locals and tourists to enjoy.

- The William Alexander Officer Farmstead in Monterey, Overton County:** A Tennessee preservation nonprofit alerted TWC to the imminent sale and development of the Officer Farmstead. The plantation has been National Register-listed since 2001, holding significance for agriculture, settlement, and military history themes. The house was constructed in 1835 by William Officer and his brother-in-law and is an excellent example of folk architecture. The two-story I-house features an “L” shaped plan, and today, contains Queen Anne Style/Eastlake influences. The expansive farmstead contains many significant outbuildings, with various construction dates, indicating the continued use and evolution of the plantation. Enslaved labor contributed to the success of Mr. Officer's plantation, owning twenty individuals at the height of the plantation's heyday. A historic cemetery on the property contains not only the remains of the original property owners and their descendants, but the remains of seven slain Confederate Texas Rangers who were killed in the Officer House in 1863 by Union forces, which was the result of conflicts between Confederate raiders and Union cavalry.



The Officer House

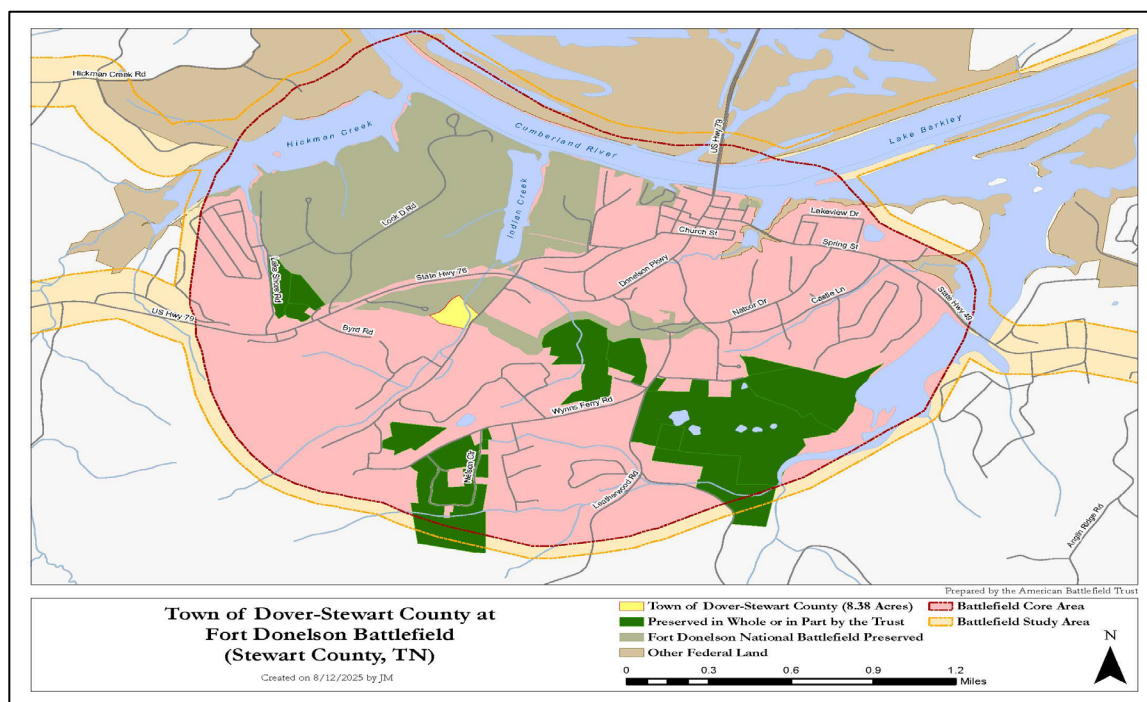
Incidents such as the Officer Farm killings were commonplace in the Upper Cumberland Plateau,

where sympathies were frequently divided among the populace. Increasing resistance to Union occupation led to widespread guerrilla, or "partisan" warfare, pitting community members, neighbors, and friends against each other.

As of the fall of 2025, the preservation organization continues searching for funding to purchase and restore the property. Unfortunately, the most likely alternative is a sale to developers who will demolish the historic farmstead.

- The Horseback Riding Ring at the Fort Donelson Battlefield, Stewart County:** This fall, the National Park Service (NPS) was alerted that the Town of Dover/Stewart County planned on selling an approximately 8.38-acre parcel located within the legislated boundary of the 1862 Civil War Battlefield, Fort Donelson, for a multi-family residential development. In response, NPS contacted TWC for preservation assistance. Despite NPS providing documentation showing decades of National Park Service ownership and stating opposition to the sale as development will adversely impact the battlefield park, the county intends to sell the property anyway. The sale of this inholding for development will affect the park’s viewshed, sense of place, feeling, and association, and will impact a portion of the battlefield that saw heavy fighting. The Fort Donelson Battlefield is one of the 38 most important battlefields in Tennessee, according to the National Park Service’s *Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation’s Civil War Battlefields*.

The Battle of Fort Donelson was fought from February 11-16, 1862, in the Western Theater of the American Civil War. The Union capture of the Confederate fort near the Tennessee–Kentucky border opened the Cumberland River, an important avenue for the invasion of the South. Additionally, the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers and railroads in the area became vital Federal supply lines, and Nashville developed into a substantial supply depot for the Union army in the West.



The Horseback Riding Ring Tract at the Fort Donelson Battlefield

Although we cannot save them all, if the Wars Commission had a larger and more reliable funding source, TWC would be able to make a greater impact in our diverse communities, preserving these hallowed sites for future generations. Development pressure is consistent throughout the state and is rising, bringing with it the increased cost for real property, while programmatic funding is declining, making battlefield preservation an even more difficult undertaking in a time when we need it the most.

Additionally, in response to these missed preservation opportunities, the Wars Commission has been collaborating with national, state, and local preservation partners to work towards developing mechanisms for identifying opportunities for battlefield preservation early on. This will be an undertaking that will take time to develop and even longer to perfect. In the interim, TWC will continue to provide individuals, communities, government entities, and preservation groups with technical support and advocacy in their preservation endeavors and will assist in the development of plans for these potential preservation opportunities.

Interpretation and Education

Interpretation and education efforts help to further advance the Wars Commission’s mission throughout Tennessee. This year, interpretation and education looked a bit different with TWC expanding its own knowledge and skill set by teaming up with experts in their fields to undertake a substantial restoration of a partially state-owned Civil War earthwork at the National Register-listed Fort Redmond Historic Site in Adams, Robertson County. The 15th Infantry U.S. Colored Troops, garrisoned at Fort Redmond until the conclusion of the Civil War, bravely defending the railroads and Union supply lines.

To launch the project, Director Scall has partnered with Mr. Bobby Cooley, THC’s Historic Sites Program Coordinator, and the THC/TWC team is collaborating with the Tennessee Division of Archaeology, Division of Forestry, and Port Royal State Historic Park to restore, conserve, interpret, and maintain the earthworks. Director Scall is looking forward to collaborating with this diverse group of experts and expanding her skills. In anticipation of the Winter 2025 kick-off site meeting, TWC/THC has drafted a Strategic Management Plan to help coordinate and guide restoration efforts.



TWC/THC Staff and Stakeholders Visit the Fort Redmond Historic Site

To expand TWC’s interpretation efforts, Director Scall has been collaborating with contracted historian Myers Brown and his team on the ongoing update to the most requested heritage tourism brochure in Tennessee Welcome Centers, *A Path Divided: Tennessee’s Civil War Heritage Trail*. This project will update the verbiage while expanding the current narrative and will include more sites for visitation, increasing interpretation opportunities for tourists. In addition to the printed brochure, this project aims to develop a digital map that features recommended sites.

Through education and engagement, the Wars Commission has expanded historic interests and preservation participation by formulating new and strengthening existing relationships with historic sites and

battlefield parks, historical societies, and heritage groups throughout Tennessee and neighboring states. Director Scall has been serving as a historic preservation advocate to city, county, and local governments as well as to various nonprofit historical associations and historic sites throughout Tennessee. Additionally, she serves as a

board member and advises several boards and organizations on historic preservation and archaeology.

Conservation Efforts

Conservation efforts have been an increasing priority for the Wars Commission. In 2023, Director Scall’s work focused on the expansion and strengthening of the conservation easement program. The expanded program includes a monitoring strategy featuring both a boots-on-the-ground and an eyes-in-the-skies approach. The aerial strategy was made possible through the application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology, which is the result of the ongoing collaboration between the Wars Commission and the Department of Environment and Conservation GIS staff that began in 2022. Through the creation of a series of map layers identifying state-owned war-related properties and properties held under easement, TWC can monitor those sites more closely. Site visits and property inspections ensure that the property owners are meeting the preservation clauses and conditions of these conservation easements, as well as provide an opportunity to photograph baseline conditions at some of the more recently acquired easement tracts.

The expanded program launched in 2024, features a review process for both new projects and demolitions, includes procedures to report suspected violations, and contains a volunteer component where Tennessee’s citizens can collaborate with the Wars Commission to monitor protected battlefields across the state.

2025 saw an increased workload resulting from the expanded easement program, indicating a successful program launch. Director Scall reviewed both demolition and project requests successfully, utilizing the new review system. Notable projects include the demolition of the structures on the Williams and Danmark Tracts, the final parcels located at the epicenter of the Franklin Battlefield. Through years of dedication, purchasing property parcel by parcel, preservation partners in Franklin have been able to achieve the unthinkable, the restoration of a battlefield thought to be lost to development in the heart of downtown. The core of the battlefield has now been restored to its 1864 appearance, and the park functions as a cornerstone of the community and a destination for heritage tourists.



The Demolition and Restoration of the Williams Tract at the Franklin Battlefield

With the increase in oversight of eased properties, the Wars Commission noted a rise in deficiencies and minor easement violations in 2025. TWC employed the new review mechanisms to address these issues, working hand in hand with property owners and managers to rectify any concerns. Open communication and collaboration with stakeholders ensures that our military heritage sites remain in pristine condition to be enjoyed by Tennesseans.

In 2025, the Director oversaw nine conservation easements, two Memorandums of Agreements (MOA), and one new lease to protect Civil War battlefields and heritage sites. The lease, a substantial achievement, has partnered the State and CSX Railroad in the preservation of the 1860s Civil War earthwork at the Fort Redmond Historic Site in Adams. The State of Tennessee acquired a 16.83-acre linear parcel containing access to the Red River, the historic Edgefield & Kentucky Railroad cut, and a portion of the Civil War earthworks in November 2013;

however, approximately 1.18 acres remained under the ownership of CSX Railroad. The lease was a prerequisite for the upcoming restoration of the Civil War earthwork.

Additionally, TWC partnered with the North American Land Trust, a national land conservation nonprofit, to preserve the 2.23-acre summit of Shy’s Hill, the best-preserved Battle of Nashville site. The Battle of Nashville was arguably the most strategic battle in Tennessee, leading to the culmination of the Civil War in the Western Theater. Although much of the Nashville Battlefield has been lost to development, preservation partners work to reclaim historic Shy’s Hill parcel by parcel.



The Summit of Shy’s Hill in Orange with Additional Preserved Land in Red

The Wars Commission continues the extensive process of signage installation throughout Tennessee. Easement signs, designating the properties as protected by the State and the Tennessee Historical and Wars Commissions, will be installed on newly added properties to TWC’s preservation portfolio. Thus far, signage has been installed at properties in Davidson, Hamilton, Hardin, Henderson, Lincoln, Madison, Maury, Robertson, Rutherford, Stewart, and Williamson Counties. Currently, the Historical Commission holds conservation easements on approximately 1,100 acres of battlefield property in 11 counties throughout Tennessee.

2025 was an exciting year in military heritage preservation in Tennessee, with several Wars Commission Grant Funded projects focusing on planning efforts, archaeology and research, interpretation, and heritage tourism. Conservation efforts blossomed with the growth of the strengthened and expanded easement program, ensuring our battlefield properties are protected

in perpetuity. TWC's focused efforts resulted in a record number of conservation easements and stewardship documents this year, and new important acreage is on the horizon for acquisition utilizing the Governor’s \$3M appropriation to support the vitally important Civil War Sites Preservation Fund. In fiscal year 26, the Tennessee Wars Commission will continue working diligently to save our rapidly disappearing battlefields and to continue to meet the preservation mission of the Tennessee Wars Commission.



The Confederate Earthworks at Redoubt Number 1, December 1864, Battle of Nashville