



Tennessee Wars Commission Annual Report, December 2022



The Tennessee General Assembly enacted legislation in April 1994, creating the Tennessee Wars Commission (TWC), as a part of the Tennessee Historical Commission (THC). Since its establishment 28 years ago—and with only one staff position--the TWC has helped acquire and permanently protect almost 8,000 acres of historic properties, including Davis Bridge Battlefield in Hardeman County and Parkers Crossroads in Henderson County. To date, our grant funding has supported over one hundred different projects that preserve, protect, and interpret Tennessee's military heritage. These projects have included funding archaeological excavations that pinpointed the location of Union fortifications in Franklin, publishing *A Survey of Sites Related to the American Revolution and War of 1812 in Tennessee*, and the creation of *A Path Divided: Tennessee's Civil War Heritage Trail*, long-recognized as the most-requested brochure at Tennessee Welcome Centers.

The Tennessee Wars Commission helps coordinate planning efforts, preservation, and promotion of structures, buildings, sites, and battlefields of Tennessee from the French and Indian War (1754-1763), American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), War of 1812 (1812-1815), Mexican-American War (1846-1848) through the Civil War (1861-1865). The Tennessee Wars Commission is also charged with acquiring or providing funds for the acquisition of battlefields, cemeteries, Underground Railroad sites, and other properties associated with these conflicts. The Wars Commission's mission is realized in part by funding grants for a wide variety of projects, through civic and governmental engagement, education and interpretation, and by way of conservation efforts.

The business of the Tennessee Wars Commission is conducted at the regular meetings of the Tennessee Historical Commission. One staff member, Ms. Nina Scall, works on behalf of the Wars Commission as Director of Programs, THC Executive Director, Patrick McIntyre, Jr., serves as the Executive Director of the TWC.

Grant Funding

The administration of two grant funds, the Wars Commission Grant Fund (WCGF) and the Civil War Sites Preservation Grant Fund (CWSPF), support the Wars Commission's preservation initiatives and help to preserve and promote the structures, buildings, sites, cemeteries, and battlefields of Tennessee.

Wars Commission Grant Fund:

This fund is available for various projects within Tennessee's diverse communities relating to the above wars. Any individual, museum, educational institution, private organization, or local government body can apply. No matching funds are required but any additional contributions are favorable. This year's grant funds totaling \$114,220.00 were awarded to six applicants during the 2022 fiscal year (FY). The successful applicants and their projects are as follows:

1. The American Battlefield Trust (ABT), Nashville, Davidson County.

The American Battlefield Trust was awarded \$50,000.00 to create *The Road to Freedom Project* which will feature both a brochure and map as well as a mobile application that explores Tennessee historic sites associated with the Black experience during the Civil War era. The project is expansive in nature and tentatively includes sites in 24 counties.

This project will enable visitors to experience the power of place and uncover compelling stories of

strife, growth, and community by surfacing concepts of empowerment and self-emancipation. Locations featured in the project will range from Civil War Trails interpretative signs and historic highway markers to museums, cemeteries, and battlefields with permanent installations related to Black history. This interactive experience will elevate the visitor experience, making these sites come alive by introducing voices of the past in the places that shaped American History.

2. The Beech Grove Confederate Memorial Association, Beechgrove, Coffee County.

The Beech Grove Confederate Memorial Association was awarded \$500.00 to repair broken tombstones and to reset approximately 20 leaning and sunken tombstones that commemorate the soldiers who were reburied after the Battle of Hoover's Gap, the principal battle in the Tullahoma Campaign on June 24, 1863.

3. The James K. Polk Memorial Association, Columbia, Maury County.

The James K. Polk Memorial Association was awarded \$11,200.00 to design and install a long-term temporary exhibit titled "Shape the Nation," on the 11th President, James K. Polk, and the Mexican-American War. The effects of the War on politics and the structure of America are massive and create an opportunity for further examination in an exhibit of this scale. The exhibit features artifacts and historic documents, from the Tennessee State Library and Archives the Polk Home, and The Tennessee State Museum, and contains interactive components for visitors of all ages.



"Shaping a Nation: Tennessee Volunteers and the Mexican American War" 2022 exhibit at Columbia's James K. Polk Home.

4. Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), Murfreesboro, Rutherford County.

MTSU was awarded \$30,385.00 to contract an assistant to thoroughly clean, stabilize, sort, identify, record, catalog, and accession the artifacts recovered in archaeological excavations from 2017 to the present at the Bass Street community associated with Fort Negley in Davidson County. The Bass Street community grew out of the contraband camps and became the first post-Emancipation African American neighborhood in Nashville and provides a unique window into the lives of the Civil War and Reconstruction era African Americans in the southern United States. After cataloging the artifacts, the project

will photograph, scan, and digitize the artifacts, making them available to the public via a website and in an exhibit located at the Fort Negley Visitor's Center Museum.

5. Parkers Crossroads Battlefield, Parkers Crossroads, Henderson County.

Parkers Crossroads, a state-owned battlefield park, was awarded \$15,500.00 to purchase a reproduction limber to display alongside their two caissons with limbers on the battlefield. The

battlefield park will explore the relationship between the field artillery pieces and the role artillery played in the battle at Parkers Crossroads.

A limber is a two-wheeled cart designed to support the trail of an artillery piece or the stock of a field carriage such as a caisson or traveling forge, allowing it to be towed. The limber was typically pulled by four to six horses and contained one chest. It was attached to a cannon or a caisson that featured two chests and a spare wheel. When the artillery piece was in action, its limber was stored at the rear of the firing line. When the ammunition from the ammunition chest on the piece's limber was

exhausted, the piece's limber and the caisson's limber exchanged places.

6. Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA), Nashville, Davidson County.

TSLA was awarded \$6,822.00 to hire an intern to support ongoing efforts to understand the impact of the Union Army occupation on Nashville from 1862 to 1865. By locating lists of the deceased published in Nashville newspapers during this period, staff will identify contrabands who were pressed into service by the Union Army to build Fort Negley as well

as citizen prisoners, government employees, confederate soldiers, and members of the U.S. Colored Troops (USCT). By researching the

names and individuals, staff will get a better understanding of the massive effort expended to care for the sick and wounded, and to bury the dead in Nashville. Additionally, this information will be helpful for descendants and genealogical researchers as they investigate the history of their ancestors. All the information will be loaded into a new database that will be included in the Genealogy Index of the Tennessee State Library & Archives.

The application process for the 2022-2023 Wars Commission grant cycle concluded on November 15, 2022. Projects will be scored and will be presented to the Tennessee Historical Commission board for final approval during the upcoming February 2023 meeting. The Wars Commission Grant Fund has budgeted \$129,200.00 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 (NPS). 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 this grant fund does require a 1:1 match of nonstate funds. Since its conception in 2013, this grant fund has preserved over 900 acres of battlefield land. In the fiscal year 2022, this grant fund awarded

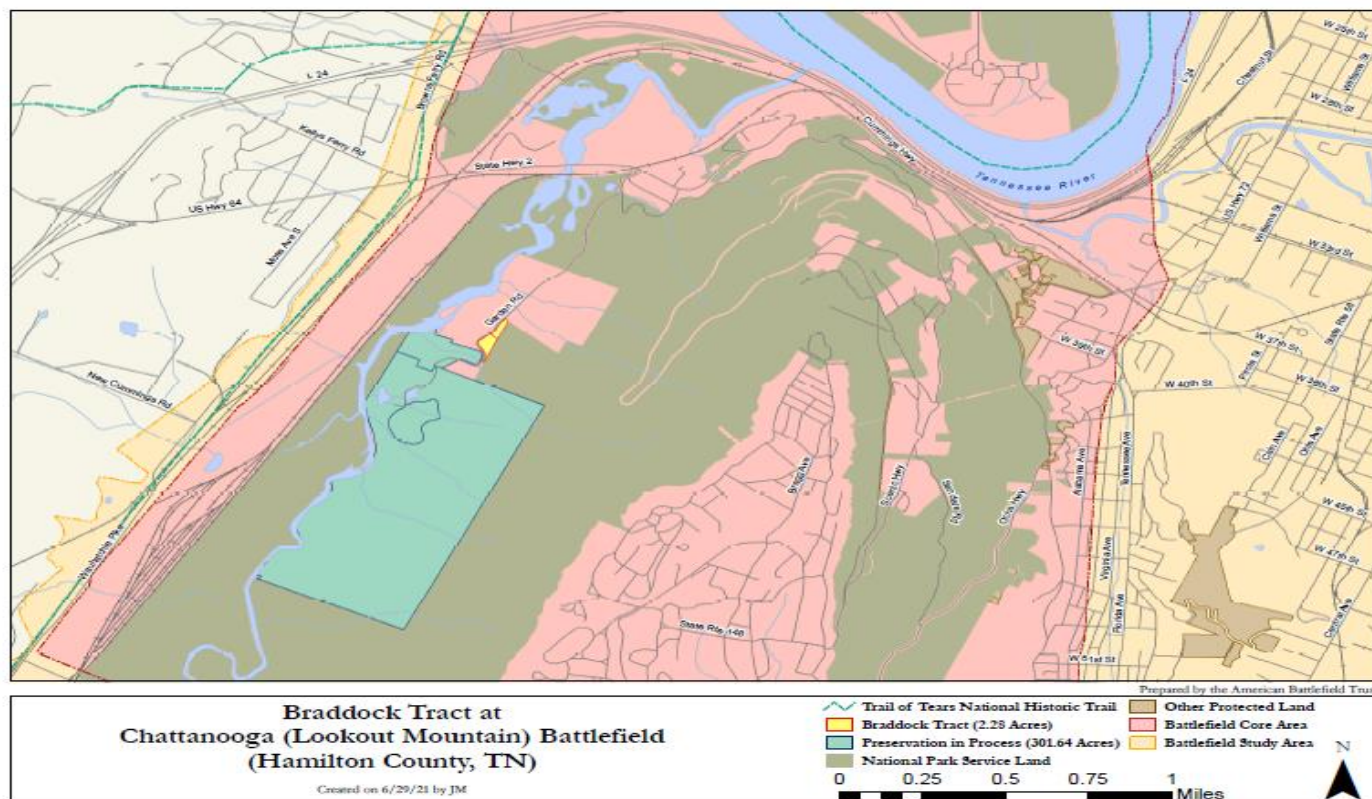


Reenactors at Parkers Crossroads work to attach a cannon to a limber for transport.

\$641,372.19 for the acquisition of the following two tracts of land:

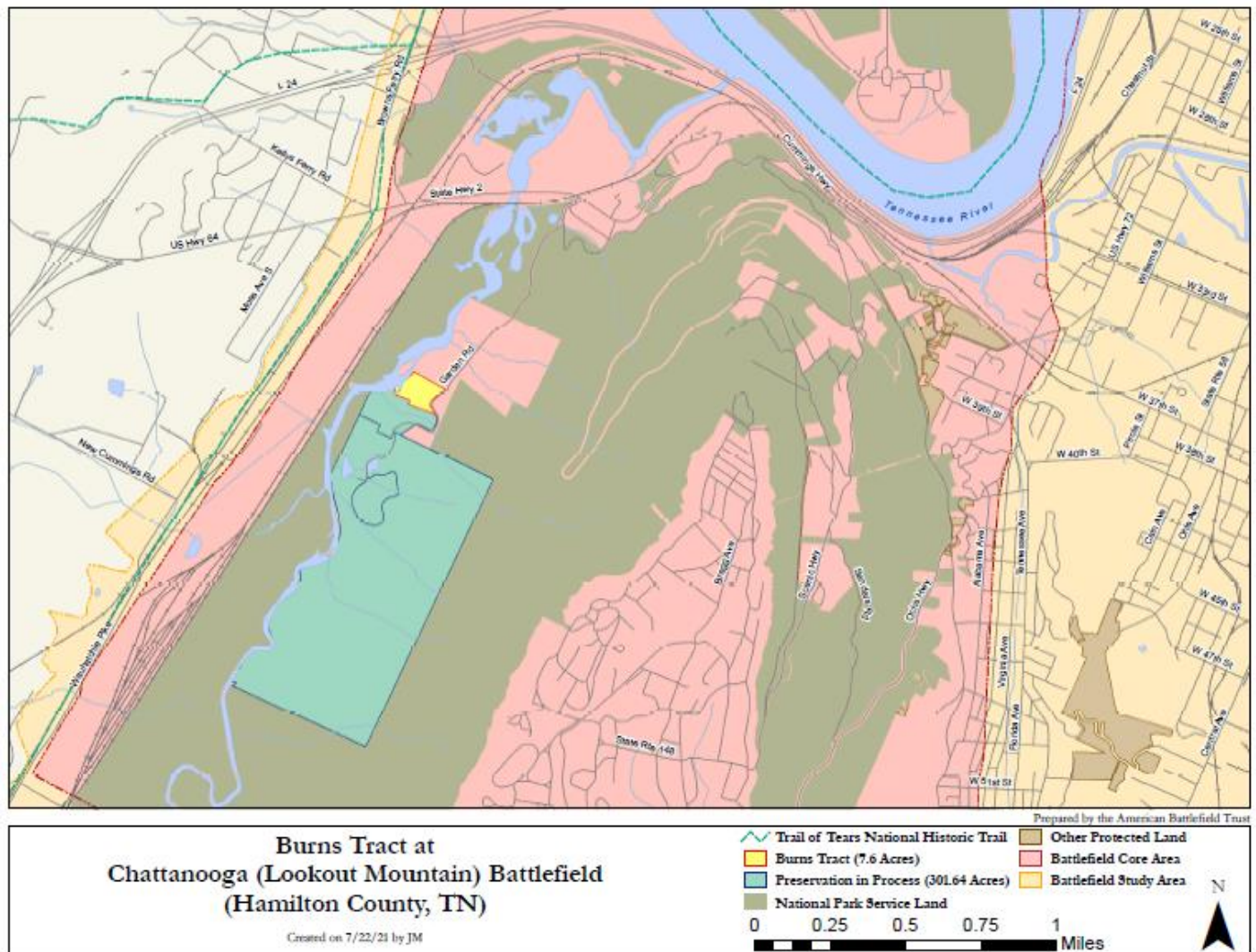
1. The Braddock Tract at the Chattanooga and Wauhatchie Battlefields, Hamilton County will be preserved with the help of the American Battlefield Trust and the American Battlefield Protection Program. The 2.28-acre tract is in the core area of the Chattanooga Battlefield and the study area of the Wauhatchie Battlefield. Additionally, this tract is located within the study area of the Chickamauga Towns Battlefield, a Revolutionary War battlefield. The Braddock Tract is adjacent to the approximately 300-acre Reflection Riding Arboretum & Nature Center, a recently acquired easement held by THC. Additionally, the Braddock Tract is also adjacent to the approximately 7.6-acre Burns Tract, which is the second acquisition of the 2022 grant cycle. The Tennessee Historical Commission will hold the conservation easement on both 2022 acquisitions.

When Hooker ordered John Geary's division to cross Lookout Creek south of the Confederate picket line, the point selected was at Light's Mill which was located on the western bank of the creek. There, Geary's men constructed a footbridge on the remains of the mill dam, and Geary's brigade, supported by Walter Whitaker's troops, crossed the creek and climbed the western slope of the mountain until the right of Geary's division rested at the base of the sandstone bluffs of the mountain. With Whitaker's men in two lines behind, Geary's division then swept northward into the flank and rear of the main Confederate positions to the north. The brigade of Charles Candy swept northward across this portion of the Lookout Mountain Battlefield, keeping their left anchored on Lookout Creek and sweeping the forests and fields for any Confederates. Near the southern end of the property, where the distance between Lookout Creek and the rock bluff above increased, Hooker ordered other troops to construct a crossing and then join Geary's sweep. Candy's brigade's sweep of what was then a large field near the north end of the property helped facilitate this. The American Battlefield Trust was awarded \$292,500.00 towards this acquisition.



2. The Burns Tract at the Chattanooga Battlefield, Hamilton County has been preserved with the help of the American Battlefield Trust and the American Battlefield Protection Program. The approximately 7.6-acre tract is located in the core area of the Chattanooga battlefield and the study area of the Wauhatchie Battlefield. Additionally, this parcel is located within the study area of the Chickamauga Towns Battlefield. The Burns Tract is adjacent to previously preserved lands and is positioned across Lookout Creek from a portion of the Lookout Mountain Battlefield that is already protected within Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

Confederate forces were entrenched on the steep-sloped 1,400-foot-tall Lookout Mountain, a seemingly impregnable position. But Hooker, having studied carefully where Confederate forces were and, more importantly, were not on the western and northwestern slopes of the mountain, planned to apply feint deception, and maneuver, to if possible, take the northern tip of the mountain. The Burns Tract is part of the ground over which Hooker's successful flanking maneuver unfolded. The American Battlefield Trust was awarded \$348,872.19 for the acquisition of this parcel.



(Reflection Riding Arboretum and Nature Center is located in teal in the above map titled "Preservation in Process.")

Civic and Government Engagement

In addition to grants, the Wars Commission's mission is in part realized through civic and government engagement. The Wars Commission's Program Director 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.

Through education and preservation support, 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.

Recent examples of engagement and collaboration are as follows:

- Director Scall serves on the Fort Negley Technical Advisory Committee and provides ongoing consultation with Fort Negley stakeholders and Nashville Metro Parks and Recreation. She met with invested parties throughout the master planning process for the historic site.
- Over the summer, Director Scall and Executive Director McIntyre met with the City of Fayetteville to sign the management contract for the Camp Blount Historic Site and to strengthen preservation partnerships between the Tennessee Historical and Wars Commissions, the City of Fayetteville, and the Camp Blount Historic Site Association (CBHSA).



Director Scall, Executive Director McIntyre, Mayor Whisenant, Representatives from the City of Fayetteville, and the Camp Blount Historic Site Association, Fayetteville, August 11, 2022.

In September, Director Scall, and Executive Director McIntyre met with the staff at Reflection Riding Arboretum and Nature Center, a recently acquired conservation easement on 300 acres in Chattanooga, to discuss balancing historic preservation, conservation, and future development at their site.

- This winter, Director Scall, and Cemetery Preservationist, Mr. Graham Perry III, made a site visit to Jefferson City to meet with Carson-Newman University Landscape Archaeologist to help assess an African American cemetery and to investigate a potential mass grave of Civil War soldiers.

Interpretation and Education

Interpretation and education efforts help to further advance the Wars Commission's mission throughout Tennessee. Recently, educational opportunities have come in the form of technical support. These include PowerPoint presentations to the Camp Blount Historic Site Association and the City of Fayetteville featuring historic site planning. Future meetings are anticipated as the Wars Commission continues to support the city and the CBHSA in the creation of a Foundation Document, a National Park Service-level planning tool.

Additionally, Madison County, Madison County Parks and Recreation Department, and the Friends of Salem Cemetery have been receiving educational and technical support steadily over the last year working toward bringing the vision of a battlefield park to fruition. Additional PowerPoint presentations on heritage tourism and historic preservation have been constructed and will debut in upcoming in-person meetings.

Conservation Efforts

Conservation efforts have been a priority for the Wars Commission. In 2022 Director Scall's work has focused on the expansion and strengthening of the conservation easement monitoring program. The expanded program is slated to contain a volunteer component where Tennessee's citizens can collaborate with the Wars Commission to monitor protected battlefields across the state. She has developed and executed a conservation easement monitoring strategy that features both a boots-on-the-ground and an "eyes-in-the-skies" approach to easement monitoring. The aerial strategy will be made possible through the anticipated application of LENS software which is designed to harness satellite technology and through the application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology.

The use of GIS technology is the result of a recent collaboration between the Wars Commission and The Department of Environment and Conservation GIS staff. Through the creation of a series of map layers identifying state-owned war-related properties and properties held under easement, the Wars Commission can monitor those sites more closely. Site visits and property inspections ensure that the preservation clauses and conditions of these conservation easements are being met by the property owners, as well as provide an opportunity to photograph baseline conditions at some of the more recently acquired easement tracts.

Additionally, easement signs have been fabricated, designating the properties as protected under easement by the State and the Tennessee Historical and Wars Commissions. The Wars Commission is working with the sign manufacturer to complete the extensive process of installation throughout Tennessee. Easement signs have been installed at sites in Hamilton, Maury, and Williamson Counties with plans to expand installation into neighboring counties after the new year. Currently, the Historical Commission holds conservation easements on approximately 2000 acres of battlefield

property in nine counties throughout Tennessee.

This last year has been eventful with several very successful preservation projects funded by the Wars Commission Grant Fund, acres of hallowed ground protected in perpetuity with funding assistance from the Civil War Sites Preservation Fund, and a strengthened conservation easement program, to name a few. As we continue to work through the aftermath of Covid-19, Director Scall remains optimistic about preservation efforts in FY-2023, by continuing to think out of the box, the Wars Commission will carry on working to meet the mission of preserving Tennessee's military heritage.



Conservation Easement Sign Installation at
Rippavilla Plantation, Spring Hill.