

THE
FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Cowpens National Battlefield

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: COWP

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Cowpens National Battlefield, South Carolina

Cowpens National Battlefield was the scene of one of the turning points of the American Revolution, and one of the great military strategic maneuvers, and today is still visited by and studied by military staff rides. On this field in January 1781, American general Daniel Morgan inspired and led his Continental and militia troops to a stunning victory over the hated British commander, Banastre "Bloody" Tarleton. Within an hour, Morgan's troops had almost annihilated the British regulars, capturing or killing nearly 900 of the 1,000 British soldiers.

Cowpens National Battlefield was established in 1972 after many decades of championing by the local citizens and patriotic organizations. The park is an 842 acre site which contains the entirety of the battlefield, a visitor center, picnic area and several miles of hiking and equestrian trails. The park represents a critical public open space for the region in which most land ownership is in private hands. The park is within an hour drive of the largest population center in South Carolina and the rapidly developing I-85 corridor. It is used by many families as a place for outdoor recreation, family gatherings and solitude. Many local citizens view the park as "their" park and see it as a part of their legacy and heritage.

The Centennial vision for Cowpens National Battlefield, Congressional delegation, friends, regional partners and interested citizens is to tell the story of the critical role of the southern states in the Revolution. Park advocates want the park managers to continue to protect and enhance the visual and aesthetic qualities of the park (including encroaching diminishment of the park boundaries) while increasing the capacity of the park facilities and staffing to accommodate more on-site programs for families and school children while taking the lead in reaching out to schools and students, both on and off site. The National Park Service is seen in the local community as an agent for promoting the importance of preserving the proud heritage of this region and educating young people about the role this region had in the development of our country. Also, the NPS is seen as one of the environmental leaders in inspiring this and future generations in nature appreciation and activities.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Timothy Stone

Site: COWP

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Cowpens National Battlefield will continue to restore the site of one of the climatic battles of the Revolutionary War. The park has made significant strides to begin restoring the battlefield to resemble the "Cowpens" in 1781 in order to understand the setting, strategies and how the battle unfolded. Without the restoration efforts it is nearly impossible to understand and learn about the brilliant tactical maneuvers of General Morgan, one of the great heroes of the Revolution. The battle is still visited today by military staff rides to study the classic military tactic "the double envelopment".

Cowpens NB will partner with the Palmetto Conservation Foundation to continue work that was accomplished during the past five years. Additional areas need to be cleared, restored and maintained to complete the entire battlefield. This work will be supported through corporate donations from companies in the Spartanburg-Greenville, SC area.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: COWP

STEWARDSHIP

Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

D. Assure that no compelling chapter in American heritage experience remains untold.

Cowpens National Battlefield will work with several small colleges and universities in the region to develop internships for history and education students to go to local grade, middle and high schools to present on-site presentations on the Revolutionary War and the role that South Carolina and Cowpens NB played in the war. Park staff find that many local children have no understanding of the Revolutionary War and have never visited the park, although it may be in their "own backyard".

The park staff will work with the interns to develop curriculum and follow-up visits to the park. This program will help connect the park to local communities and help gain an understanding and respect by the local children for their heritage and importance in the founding of this country.

The park will partner with the local universities to support this program through matching funding and special endowments from local educational programs.

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Site: COWP

RECREATION

Establish "volun-tourism" excursions to national parks for volunteers to help achieve natural and cultural resource protection goals.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The restoration of the Cowpens battlefield will provide opportunities for volunteers from the surrounding metropolitan area (Greenville-Spartanburg, SC and Charlotte, NC) to help with the battlefield restoration and to learn about National Parks, the Revolutionary War and the climatic battle of Cowpens. The park will work with outdoor recreation retailers such as REI to organize volunteer work days. The park will also develop volunteer programs for several small universities and colleges within the region help in restoration efforts.

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Site: COWP

RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

Cowpens National Battlefield currently has a visitor center with no auditorium and limited seating capacity. By expanding the current visitor center, the capacity to give programs to school groups, special programs and large tour groups will significantly increase the number of visitors to ranger led programs. The park often has to limit programs because of lack of an auditorium and the safety and fire code limits of the current visitor center. The expanded visitor center will allow visitors and children to gain greater exposure to rangers and the park story, hence improving the ability to attract new visitors to a park that is within a short driving distance from two major Interstates.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: COWP

EDUCATION

Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

By developing internships with local colleges and universities, the park will be able to tap into the latest in educational theory and medium to develop programs that can reach today's young people. This program will not only provide a forum for tomorrow's educators to gain real world experience, but also expose them to the ideals and opportunities of the national park experience. It provides a forum for children to learn about their heritage and be inspired by young people from their own communities. It will energize the park staff and create new and meaningful ties to local communities and expose the park staff to new opportunities for partnerships.

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Site: COWP

EDUCATION

Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

A. Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs.

The park lacks the facilities and capacity to accommodate school groups of over 50 in the visitor center. This has been very limiting and has hindered the park's ability to market the park to grade school, high school, universities and historical tourism as a "class room" destination. With a new auditorium and high tech abilities to provide state of the art presentations, Cowpens NB can become one of the primary destinations for a large population base within a one hour drive of the park.

The park will partner with the Palmetto Conservation Foundation to fund raise for the visitor center expansion. This effort will focus on several large corporations that are located within the Spartanburg-Greenville, SC area.

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Site: COWP

EDUCATION

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

The restoration of Cowpens National Battlefield has increased visitor enjoyment of the park as the premier open green space of this region. By restoring the battlefield, the "open" pasture like setting has made walking and solitude in a nature setting an increasingly popular activity, especially in the morning and evening. Families are one of the primary participants in these activities. The battle of Cowpens has deep roots for many of the families of this region and they take a strong sense of pride and ownership in the National Park and the improved historical sense of the park. The completion of the battlefield restoration will provide a greater sense of understanding of the battle and improve the visual qualities and vegetation diversity of the park.

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Site: COWP

PROFESSIONALISM

Promote a safety and health culture for all employees and visitors.

Reduce the number of employee lost-time incidents and serious visitor injuries by 20 percent.

The current park visitor center has a limited capacity. A new auditorium will allow for visitors to enjoy the park in a safe environment that meets all safety codes. Park rangers will be able to deliver programs and safety messages in a setting that promotes a sense of responsible stewardship without a sense of crowding and potential for visitor injuries.

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Site: COWP

PROFESSIONALISM

Model what it means to work in partnership.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The internship program with local colleges and universities will be an opportunity for young people to work with national park professionals. This program will inspire the interns to learn about the Revolutionary War and the national park experience. The park staff will have the opportunity to mentor the interns and in turn be inspired and renewed by the youthful optimism and sense of wonder that long time park staff have sometimes have lost. The opportunity to be part of this park service internship will be competitive and a high point for the interns' college experience.

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