

THE  
**FUTURE**  
OF  
**AMERICA'S**  
**NATIONAL**  
**PARKS**

First Annual  
Centennial Strategy for

# Stones River National Battlefield

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: STRI

Year: 2007

**Vision Statement**

Stones River National Battlefield is a tranquil enclave in one of the nation's most rapidly growing metro areas. Even with throngs of visitors enthralled by the sights and sounds of cannon or musketry during living history programs, it's difficult to believe that for three terrible days during the winter of 1862 - 63, this patchwork landscape of fields, forests and cedar glades was the site of one of the Civil War's bloodiest encounters. Over 81,000 Union and Confederate soldiers fought for control of the rich agricultural region of middle Tennessee and its network of turnpikes and railroads. Although a tactical draw, this battle was an important strategic victory for the North. Both sides paid a high cost with total casualties exceeding 23,000.

Those of us who are privileged to work here take enormous pride in what we do to preserve this place and interpret the events that occurred here. We are committed to maintaining an atmosphere where visitors are able to (1) contemplate the sacredness of the battlefield, (2) understand and appreciate this battle and its significance within the context of the American Civil War, and (3) experience a personal connection with this past human conflict.

The Centennial vision for Stones River is to continue the process of expanding our educational and interpretive capacity which began with the 2004 renovation of our visitor center. Ongoing projects or projects projected to be completed during the centennial include installation of new wayside exhibits and rehabilitation of the park's auto tour road and trail system including improved access to the park. In the area of resource management, we will restore recently acquired lands, eradicate exotics and plant native species, preserve fragile cedar glades, and manage cultural landscapes to maintain the historic pattern of field and forest. In the area of interpretation and education we will build upon the foundation of existing programs such as the Legacy of Stones River Symposium series, "Hallowed Ground" lantern tours of the national cemetery and teacher workshops to broaden our reach beyond the traditional park visitor.

Stones River has partners who make the critical difference in terms of our ability to move ahead in new and different directions. These include Eastern National, the Friends of Stones River National Battlefield, Middle Tennessee State University, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area.

**Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager**

Stuart K Johnson, Superintendent



Site: STRI

**STEWARDSHIP**

**Improve the condition of park resources and assets.**

**Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species.**

Stones River National Battlefield will continue its work improving the condition of the park's natural and cultural landscape by controlling thirty-two invasive plant species using integrated pest management principles. Local genotype native plant material will be used to rehabilitate areas affected by invasive plant infestations, structure removal, and other disturbances. This work will improve habitat for a variety of native animals including high point bird species, such as Bewick's wren and the lark sparrow, for which grasslands and cedar woodlands are important components of their habitat. These species are becoming increasingly rare across the landscape but have been documented from plant communities within Stones River National Battlefield.

Restoration will be accomplished through partnerships developed with Middle Tennessee State University, the Discovery Center, the Stones River Watershed Association, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the city of Murfreesboro as well as through regular volunteer work days organized by the park.

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

**Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.**

Stones River National Battlefield will have an approved Cultural Landscape Report in place by FY2008. This report includes recommendations for a number of projects to improve the condition of the park's cultural landscapes.

Projects such as clearing forest from historically open areas, preserving battlefield earthworks, and expanding the park's efforts to eliminate invasive exotic species while encouraging the spread of native plants represent are critical components of improving and/or maintaining the good condition of seven documented cultural landscapes.

The park also has several planned projects to repair and maintain historic structures. These include repairs to the Artillery Monument and the Stones River National Cemetery Wall. Other projects that could be completed by the Centennial are re-pointing the Hazen Brigade Monument wall, preservation treatment of the Regular Brigade Monument, straightening and cleaning of the more than 7,000 headstones in Stones River National Cemetery, and continuing preservation treatment of earthen structures at Fortress Rosecrans and Redoubt Brannan.

Site: STRI

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

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Site: STRI

STEWARDSHIP

Set the standard of excellence in urban park landscape design and maintenance.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Stones River is in the design phase of a project to improve the park's self-guiding tour routes. The completed project will result in an improved auto tour route and trail system with enhanced park access, improved interpretive opportunities and enhanced visitor and employee safety. The once-rural environs of Stones River are rapidly urbanizing and the sensitive design of new park entrances, roads, pull-offs, trails, etc. can play a critical role in transitioning visitors from an urban setting and then placing them in a new setting conducive to understanding the events, sights and sounds of the Battle of Stones River. Also critical to the design process is the need for new facilities to be sustainable and efficiently maintained.

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Site: STRI

**ENVIRONMENT**

Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

Stones River National battlefield proposes to reduce the environmental impacts of park operations through a combination of methods. We will develop, review, and continually improve our environmental management system (EMS). We will reduce our generation of solid and hazardous wastes, reduce energy consumption in buildings and vehicles, and energetically expand our purchasing of so called green products. Our management of the park landscape will incorporate sustainable elements such as reducing need for irrigation, fertilizer, and pesticides as well as mowing, and assuring that new developments incorporate low environmental impact processes and materials.

We will encourage our staff and visitors in these efforts through consciousness raising, educational programming, publications, recognition, and awards

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Site: STRI

**ENVIRONMENT**

Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Stones River National Battlefield has established and maintains a variety of relationships that contribute significantly to shared environmental stewardship of the park and surrounding area. Through relationships developed with Middle Tennessee State University, the Discovery Center, City of Murfreesboro, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Tennessee Division of Forestry, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Friends of the Greenway, and the Stones River Watershed Association, the park has been able to extend its reach well beyond park boundaries. Stones River National Battlefield, in cooperation with these partners, will continue to engage the local community in stewardship activities by organizing volunteer work days and joint projects that contribute to the restoration of our linked managed lands along the Stones River.

We will continue our efforts to educate park visitors, the local community, and local government entities through educational talks, hand-on activities, and incorporation of others in our management efforts to instill a sense of responsibility and stewardship within partners and volunteers

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RECREATION

Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park is applying for Junior Ranger Ambassador in FY2008. This SCA intern will rework the park's Junior Ranger activity booklet. The new booklet will be printed using funds from the park's Eastern National percentage donation account.

Park rangers are working with representatives of local scouting councils and troops to develop interpretive programs and activities that will help scouts meet advancement milestones. The park's volunteer coordinator will continue to work with Eagle Scout candidates to arrange service projects.

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Site: STRI

EDUCATION

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

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Stones River National Battlefield has a goal of increasing its education program contacts. A critical component of this effort is continuing to develop and improve the parks on site and outreach education resources. The park's education coordinator presents at least two teacher workshops annually to keep local educators involved in the development of curriculum materials and park-based learning opportunities.

The park has submitted a series of projects through PMIS for Parks As Classrooms grants to improve and expand its outreach resources. These projects include an expanded travelling trunk program, development of an outreach video package in partnership with Middle Tennessee State University, and expansion of the park's web based education materials.

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Site: STRI

**PROFESSIONALISM**

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

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Stones River National Battlefield continues to make establishing a safer and healthier workplace and visitor environment a high priority. This is evidenced by accomplishments in conducting training and meetings focused on specific working conditions and accessing visitor use areas; holding conferences and workshops for a collateral duty safety officer, managers and supervisors; updating SMIS, utilizing the Department-wide safety and health website, SafetyNet; continually revising policy and requirement documents; monitoring Workers' Compensation issues; and establishing safety and health elements in employee performance plans. We will continue to strive to reduce both safety and health incidents, lost-time injuries and illnesses, and reduce visitor accidents.

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Site: STRI

**PROFESSIONALISM**

Model what it means to work in partnership.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Stones River National Battlefield will continue to build partnerships with Middle Tennessee State University. Park staff will continue to set up internship opportunities with several university departments and centers. The park also plans to continue partnering with the university, its Friends group and other local organizations to present installments of the Legacy of Stones River program series which saw its fourth installment in March 2007.

Stones River National Battlefield has active and involved partners that allow the park to increase its reach within the community, considerably improve its ability to rehabilitate the park's cultural landscape through on the ground assistance and development of educational materials, and reduce the potential impact of invasive plant infestations from adjacent lands. The park's growing relationship with the city of Murfreesboro has resulted in the management of approximately ten acres of the invasive Chinese yam on National Park Service and city property and planting of native plants within treated sites. Combined time contributions of all partners to this project thus far have reached 439 hours.

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**PROFESSIONALISM**

- Make national parks the first choice in philanthropic giving among those concerned about environmental, cultural, and recreational values.**
  
- Improve communications and marketing capacity to increase public understanding of our mission, opportunities, and benefits.**

Stones River National Battlefield proposes to improve communications and marketing capacity to increase public understanding of our mission, opportunities, and benefits. We will incorporate elements of the NPS Graphic Identity Program in all our publications, signs, and products that are available to the public. We will develop news releases, publications, web pages that highlight our programs and offer opportunities for people to contribute to them. We will improve and increase our outreach programs to community and education groups and refine our messages so that people have a clear understanding of our goals and ways that they can support them.

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