



On December 19, 2014, Congress passed Public Law 113-291, which directed the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of “[t]he area encompassed by the National Historic Landmark designations related to the 1862 Battle of Mill Springs located in Pulaski and Wayne Counties in the State of Kentucky.” Based on this legislated directive, the National Park Service (NPS) is beginning a special resource study of the Mill Springs Battlefield to determine its potential for designation as a new unit of the national park system.

The purpose of this special resource study is to gather information about the Mill Springs Battlefield through historical research and public input, and then to report these findings to Congress. The special resource study will evaluate the potential for inclusion of the Mill Springs Battlefield in the national park system based on whether it meets congressionally established criteria for significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for NPS management. The special resource study may also weigh other management options for the battlefield. Based on the special resource study, the National Park Service will determine whether the battlefield meets the criteria for inclusion in the national park system and make a recommendation to the secretary of the interior. The secretary will forward the recommendation to Congress.

This special resource study will take place over the next two years depending on its findings. During this time, the study will assess public interest and support by providing opportunities for your comment. Please provide your thoughts on the study online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/millspringssrs>. We would appreciate hearing from you by February 15, 2016, so we can consider your comments in preparing the study.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about and comment on this study effort. We look forward to hearing from you!





Brief Description of the Battle of Mill Springs

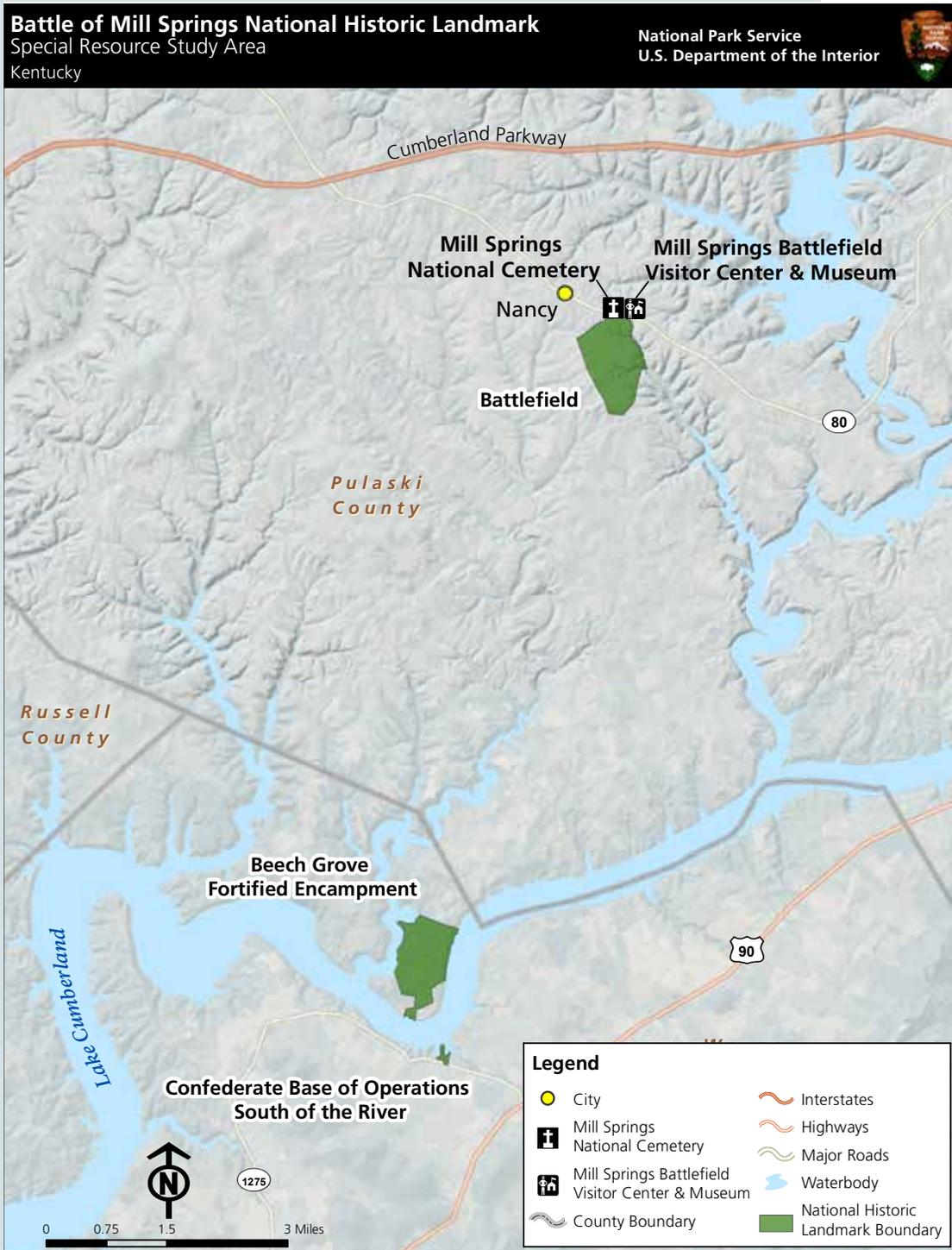
The Battle of Mill Springs was one of Kentucky's largest Civil War battles and gave the Union Army its first major victory in the war following the disastrous defeat at the Battle of First Manassas the previous summer. From the early days of the American Civil War, it was evident that Kentucky held incredible strategic importance, with the Confederate States of America hoping to hold the Cumberland Gap and the Union seeing southern Kentucky as the gateway to Confederate strongholds in Tennessee. Both sides shifted regiments into the state during late summer and fall of 1861.

After unsuccessfully crossing into Kentucky and being repulsed by Federal troops in October 1861, Brigadier General Felix K. Zollicoffer led his troops from Tennessee into southern Kentucky again in November to set up winter camp on the banks of the Cumberland River at Mill Springs (see map). Deciding the north bank offered a superior strategic location; Zollicoffer moved his forces north to Beech Grove in December 1861 and set to work digging entrenchments to protect their defensive position.

While Zollicoffer's men were settling in for the winter, Federal forces were working to drive the Confederate troops from their stronghold. Zollicoffer's superior, Major General George Bibb Crittenden arrived at the camp in early January to take control of the Confederate forces, which now numbered around 6,500 men, and to prepare for a Union attack. Union Brigadier Generals George Thomas and Albin Schoepf were ordered to drive the Confederate force across the Cumberland River and spent early January marching from Lebanon and Somerset, Kentucky. On January 17, 1862, after battling poor weather and bad roads, Thomas' men and three regiments sent ahead by Schoepf finally arrived at Logan's Crossroads (now called Nancy, Kentucky). Fearing that Thomas and Schoepf's combined forces would overpower the Confederates at Beech Grove, Crittenden decided to take the offensive and ordered the Confederate army to march on Logan's Crossroad the night of January 18.

The Confederate troops met the Federal pickets the morning of January 19, 1862. While the initial Confederate strike slowly forced the Union line back, the battle began to stabilize as more of Schoepf's Union forces arrived. Thick morning fog, increasing smoke created by the black powder rifles, and rain that rendered the Confederate forces aging flintlock muskets ineffective combined to create an air of confusion that was only increased after Zollicoffer's death. The Confederates were able to mount another significant attack but were ultimately unable to break Union lines and began to retreat to their fortified camp nine miles south of the battle lines. While Union forces were slowed by rear guard action, Crittenden ordered a full withdrawal, leaving behind artillery, horses, wagons, and most camp equipment as troops fled across the Cumberland River. The Battle of Mill Springs forced Crittenden back to Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and resulted in 155 Confederate and 55 Federal dead.

The Confederate force lost more than men at the Battle of Mill Springs. The defeat caused their defense line to collapse in eastern Kentucky, leaving the region itself under Federal control and eastern Tennessee open to invasion. The subsequent Confederate losses of Forts Henry and Donelson, both just over the border in Tennessee, forced all Confederate forces to retreat out of Kentucky by February 1862.



What is a Special Resource Study?

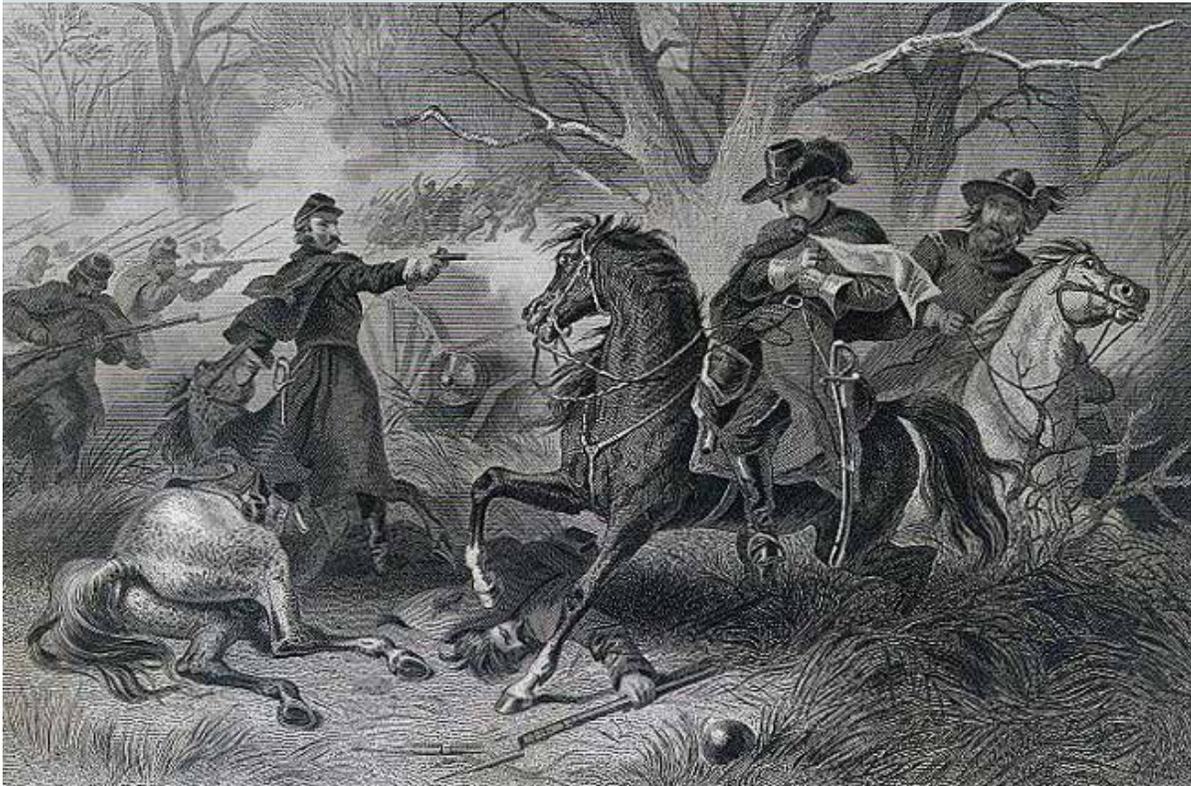
The National Park Service was created to preserve unimpaired outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational resources. The treasures in this system have been set aside by the American people to protect, preserve, and share our nation's greatest stories. Usually a new unit of the national park system is established by an act of Congress. Before passing such legislation, Congress requires reliable information about the quality of resources in the area under consideration and the potential for visitor enjoyment and efficient management. The National Park Service collects this information and provides a recommendation to the Department of the Interior who then provides a report of its findings to Congress through special resource studies. This process ensures that only those candidate sites that are most deserving of national designation are included within the national park system.



Special Resource Study Criteria

The 1998 National Parks Omnibus Management Act (54 *United States Code* 100507) established the process for identifying and authorizing studies of new national park units. Under the law an area must meet all of the following criteria to be recommended as an addition to the national park system:

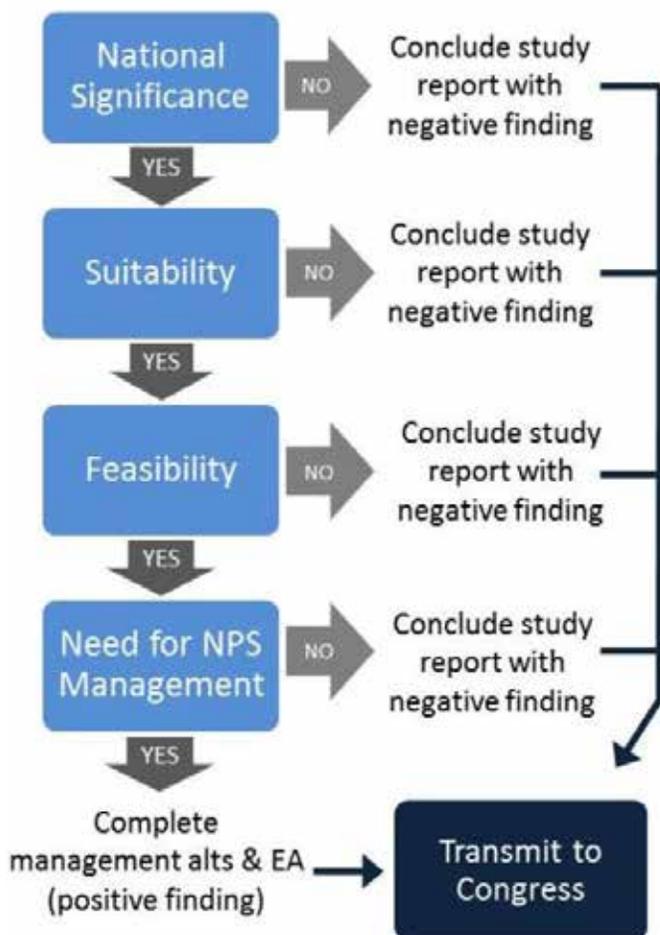
- Contain nationally significant natural and/or cultural resources.
- Represent a natural or cultural resource that is not already adequately represented in the national park system or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by another land-managing entity.
- Must be (1) of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure long-term protection of the resources and visitor enjoyment, and (2) capable of efficient administration by the National Park Service at a reasonable cost; important feasibility factors include landownership, acquisition costs, life cycle maintenance costs, access, threats to the resource, and staff or development requirements.
- Require direct NPS management that is clearly superior to other management approaches.



Special Resource Study Process

An NPS team has been assembled to prepare the Mill Springs Battlefield Special Resource Study. This team will evaluate the area to determine if it meets the four study criteria outlined on page five. If the area does not meet all of the criteria, the study will conclude with a negative finding. If the area is found to meet all of the criteria, then the study team will prepare an environmental assessment, which will analyze the impacts of potential alternatives for managing the site. Additional public input would be sought on this environmental assessment. The findings of the study and the environmental assessment will then be transmitted by the NPS director to the secretary of the interior, who in turn will submit the report and a management recommendation to Congress. It is then up to Congress to take action on legislation establishing a new unit of the national park system.

SRS Completion Pathways



*We Would Like to Hear Your Thoughts
and Ideas about the Following:*

1. What makes Mill Springs Battlefield unique among other Civil War sites and battlefields?
2. Do you have any ideas or concerns about preserving and interpreting the Mill Springs Battlefield? What are they?
3. What lands or resources should or should not be included in the study area? Why?
4. What are your thoughts about possible management options for the Mill Springs Battlefield?
5. Do you have any other ideas or comments you would like to share with us?

Please provide your thoughts on the study online at:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/millspringssrs>

Or comments may also be submitted through the mail to:

Mill Springs Special Resource Study
Att: Justin Henderson
National Park Service - Denver Service Center
12795 W. Alameda Parkway
Lakewood, CO 80228

Comments received by **February 15, 2016** will be the most helpful in preparing the study.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DENVER SERVICE CENTER – JUSTIN HENDERSON
PO Box 25287
DENVER CO 80225-0287

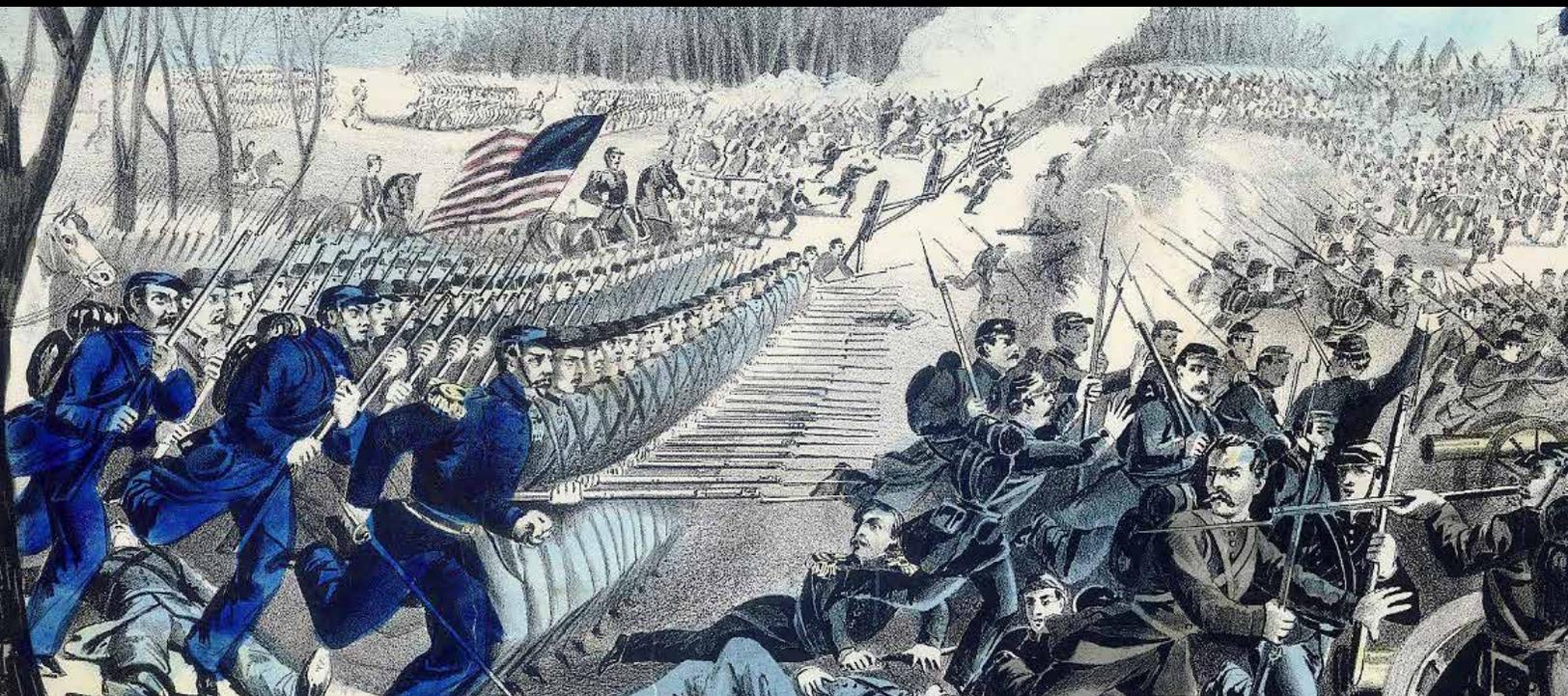
FIRST-CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PERMIT NO. G-83

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300



**Mill Springs Battlefield Special Resource Study
Newsletter Winter 2016**

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Thank you for your interest in the Mill Springs Battlefield Special Resource Study!