



The Gettysburg Battlefield Rehabilitation Project: An Overview

From July 1 through 3, 1863, more than 165,000 Union and Confederate soldiers collided on the Battlefield at Gettysburg. Today, a major effort is underway to rehabilitate this hallowed ground where more than 51,000 soldiers fell. The goal of this multi-year, multi-million dollar rehabilitation project is threefold: to restore the Gettysburg Battlefield's historic integrity, to enhance visitors' understanding of and appreciation for what happened here, and to help create a sustainable environment by improving wetlands, water quality and wildlife habitat.

Fast facts about the Gettysburg National Military Park Battlefield

- Gettysburg National Military Park covers more than 6,000 acres.
- Gettysburg National Military Park was created in 1895.
- It is the site of 1,328 monuments and memorials, the largest collection of outdoor sculpture in the world.

The Landscape of the Battlefield: Then and Now

The landscape of the Gettysburg National Battlefield has changed significantly since those three fateful days in 1863. In 1863, there were 898 acres of woodlands and woodlots on the Battlefield. Studies from 1993 show that the wooded areas now covers 1,974 acres. The 160 linear miles of fencing on the original Battlefield now total just 43 miles. And 1863's 230 acres of orchards have been reduced to a mere 18 acres.

To determine what physical changes were necessary to preserve and interpret the story of Gettysburg, a system called KOCOAA was used.

Key Terrain includes those areas that were seized, retained or controlled in battle.

Observation includes signal stations and fields of fire.

Cover and Concealment includes stone walls, woods, ridges and other features offering visual protection.

Obstacles include fences, buildings and field fortifications that affected military movement.

Avenues of Approach are the roads, farm lanes and open fields that led to the enemy.

Each of these important physical qualities helps tell the story of the Battle of Gettysburg. The goal of the Gettysburg National Military Park is to rehabilitate the land to as close as possible to its 1863 appearance. This will involve:

- The removal of up to 576 acres of existing woodland that was not present in 1863.
- The addition of 115 acres of woodlands that were present in 1863, but are now lost.
- The repair, rehabilitation or reconstruction of 9.8 miles of historic lanes and roads that were present in 1863, but are now missing or overgrown.
- The removal of the National Tower, the original Park Visitor Center and 1962 Cyclorama Center, the Home Sweet Home Motel and the Ford Dealership.
- The restoration of historic field patterns by adding 39.1 miles of field boundaries, using fencing, vegetation patterns and hedgerows.
- The rehabilitation of 160 acres of orchards so that they reflect their historic sizes and spatial configuration.
- The rehabilitation of 278 acres of forests to attain their appearance as historic woodlots.
- The replanting of 65 acres of thickets at the general height they were during the battle.

In addition, the National Park Service is currently replanting 30 acres of historic apple orchards, which were part of the original landscape. The non-profit Friends of Gettysburg has also served as a principal partner for Battlefield rehabilitation, taking on projects and working to preserve more than 400 acres of important Battlefield land through purchase and easements. This organization merged with the Gettysburg Foundation in 2007.

The Environmental Benefits of the Battlefield Rehabilitation Project

The rehabilitation effort will preserve nature as it preserves history. The project calls for the reestablishment of grasslands, restoration of wetlands, and replanting of orchards. Long-term improvements to the environment include:

- The restoration of up to 100 acres of wetlands

- Fencing of cattle from streams to improve water quality
- The increasing of habitat for grassland species, ground nesting birds and native plants.

The plan complies with the Clean Air Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Federal Water Pollution Act and Water Quality Act, floodplain management, protection of wetlands, and all other applicable laws and policies that protect the environment.

Rehabilitating the Landscape: The Cemetery Ridge Project

To teach and inspire the millions who visit here, Gettysburg National Military Park preserves preserve the topographic, landscape and cultural features that were significant to the outcome of the Battle of Gettysburg. However, in the 43.5-acre area of Cemetery Ridge, many of those features have succumbed to natural vegetative growth and other aspects of evolution. The Cemetery Ridge project was initiated to rehabilitate this highly significant land. This project involves:

- Removal of the original Gettysburg visitor center building, which sits on the hallowed ground of Zeigler's Grove. This older structure is being replaced by a new 139,000 square foot Museum and Visitor Center, which will open in April 2008. The new center is situated on an area that saw no major battle action, about 2/3 of a mile from the former park visitor center.
- Removal of the 1962 Cyclorama building and the parking lots and roads associated with the Cyclorama building and original visitor center building – all of which lie on soil where nearly 1,000 soldiers fell.
- Removal of 6,700 feet of overhead power lines on the historic Taneytown Road corridor. These lines will be replaced by underground lines.
- Re-establishment of the historic landscapes at the center of the Union army's battle line in July 1863.
- Relocation of seven Civil War monuments to the sites where they were originally placed by veterans of the battle. These monuments were moved during the construction of the 1962 Cyclorama building and surrounding parking lots.

This project is a major initiative of the park's 1999 General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. The total project cost for the rehabilitation of Cemetery Ridge is \$9,588,694. The Gettysburg Foundation will provide \$7,000,000. The NPS is also requesting \$2,588,694 from Congress. The Cemetery Ridge project is also eligible for matching funds through the Centennial Challenge, President George W. Bush's initiative for the National Park Service's 2016 centennial.