KETTLE CREEK

BATTLEFIELD PARK

MASTER PLAN

WILKES COUNTY, GEORGIA

APRIL 2013

The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

Prepared for

Wilkes County Board of Commissioners

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The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

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The Kettle Creek
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Battle of Kettle Creek took place more than two centuries ago, but the significance of the site is as clear today as it was the day of the battle. One of the most important Revolutionary War engagements in Georgia, the battle, a dramatic victory for the Patriots, served as perhaps the first clear notice that the British strategy for winning the war in the South had significant flaws. Largely undisturbed, the battlefield offers the rare opportunity for visitors to lose themselves in history, to visualize the events as they might have occurred. Generations of Georgians have visited the site, and efforts have been made through the years to purchase land and tell the story of the battle. Currently, a small slice of the battlefield is in public hands, owned and maintained by Wilkes County.

However, most of the battlefield is not preserved, and additional interpretive resources and visitor amenities could greatly improve the experience of visiting the site. This document, the Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan, is the culmination of a nearly year-long planning process that involved a range of stakeholders in an effort to address those issues and lay the groundwork for improvements at the site. It analyzes the current condition of the battlefield and makes a set of recommendations, divided into short-term and longer-term actions, that are aimed at protecting the site, improving the visitor experience and better telling the story of the battle. Key recommendations (found in general form in Chapter 5 and in the form of specific action items as part of an implementation program in Chapter 6) include:

- strategies for acquiring 250 acres of the battlefield area and protection of the surrounding viewshed;

- the creation and proposed location of an interpretive trail system;

- the addition of visitor amenities such as restrooms and a picnic area;

- the creation of an off-site visitors center and an on-site orientation area;

- positioning the site as not only a significant location in its own right, but also as the gateway to the story of the war in the Georgia backcountry;

- longer-term steps, such as the creation of an on-site visitors center and of infrastructure improvements.

While a range of stakeholders, both private and public, local and state, played a part in the planning

process, this plan is a Wilkes County document, prepared under contract with the county, and the outlines of the plan reflect the county's needs and resources. The plan, then, represents an effort to balance the likely reality of constrained resources with the long-term vision and goals expressed by battlefield advocates. Specifically, this balance is realized through a combination of specific, modest short-term steps that can quickly upgrade the visitor experience and a broader, longer-term vision of the site that will take significant outside resources to realize. Still, while recommendations are split into short- and long-term actions, the intent is that, should resources or opportunities become available, the "long term" steps could take place at any time.

The document is arranged into the following chapters:

1. Background and Vision. Introduction and overview of the project.

2. History and Context. A brief summary of the events of the battle, intended as a means to provide context to users of this document.

3. Conditions Analysis. A look at the current condition of the battlefield, the surrounding area, investments, community resources and other relevant factors.

4. Implementation Resources and Models for Development. A listing and description of funding and other resources potentially available for Kettle Creek. The chapter also includes broad models for the development of a historic site, based on case studies of similar battlefields.

5. Preservation and Improvement Plan. This chapter makes up the core of this document. It includes a final version of goals for the project, methods for acquiring land and preserving the battlefield and means for improving the visitor experience at the park.

6. Implementation Program. Recommended short-term steps, including a detailed short-term work program.

Appendices. Additional information, including case studies of other battlefields, public input and cost estimates.

The Kettle Creek battlefield is a site blessed with multiple resources. Most importantly, it is a place where it is still possible, as one survey participant put it, to have the feeling "of being there just as the battle begins, as if you can hear horses and voices through the trees." Unlike so many other

historic sites, the land has not been surrounded by or even buried beneath development. History is still at the surface, within reach. With these resources at hand and armed with a clear vision, committed battlefield advocates and local officials have the opportunity to create a legacy that will reach many future generations of Georgians and Americans.

The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

CHAPTER 1:

BACKGROUND AND VISION

On a Sunday morning in February, 1779 – Valentine's Day, in fact – a group of some 400 American soldiers advanced upon a larger but unsuspecting militia of British sympathizers, or Loyalists, camped alongside a rain-swollen creek in the backwoods of Georgia. Three hours later, their leader fallen on the field of battle, the Loyalist force was in splinters, with soldiers fleeing for the safety of British-occupied Augusta or melting away into the hills. The short, sharp fight – the Battle of Kettle Creek, as it came to be known – represented the first significant battle of the Revolutionary War's Southern campaign to take place in the backcountry, far from the bustling cities of the

Figure 1.1. 1868 Map showing Kettle Creek battlefield (Georgia Department of Archives and History).

coastal South. The outcome was not decisive in narrow military terms, as the British scored a major victory over the Americans only a few weeks later at the Battle of Brier Creek. Yet in a broader sense, it provided the first clear signal of the ultimate fate of the war. The victory gave the first sign that the British strategy of focusing on the South and rallying rural residents to take up arms for the crown would not enjoy the success London's war planners had hoped – and with that, the remaining chance of holding the colonies would ultimately slip away.

More than two centuries later, an extensive infrastructure of preserved battlefields across the former British colonies documents the history of the birth of our nation. From Concord to Yorktown,

Trenton to Kings Mountain, Valley Forge to Guilford Courthouse, the sites of significant battles have been preserved and interpreted for new generations of Americans to visit, learn from, and reflect upon. Yet in the telling of that great founding story, Kettle Creek and the state of Georgia remain comparatively silent, despite their significance to the war. While a sliver of the land where the battle took place is under the sound stewardship of the Wilkes County government, most is in private hands. Little interpretation is available. Few visitors walk the still-rural landscape. The current condition of the battlefield is in stark contrast to its significance to the Revolution. In fact, though, this lack of development mirrors the site's strongest point – the fact that the area is largely free from modern development. In many ways, the battlefield is as it was more than two centuries

Figure 1.2. Kettle Creek today.

ago. It is a place that easily permits a visitor to lose himself or herself in history, to step back into a landscape that became part of the arc of the nation's story.

This untapped potential has been noted by many Georgians and historians in past decades. In recent years, grassroots interest has arisen anew. Local history-lovers have endeavored to give the site the prominence it deserves. Their efforts have already led to a number of accomplishments, including the funding of an extensive archaeological survey that provided a rigorous documentation of the physical scope of the battle and the location of crucial events that took place during the fray. A nonprofit group devoted to preserving the site has formed and is increasingly active in generating support and interest. In recognition of the growing interest in the site, the State of Georgia, Wilkes County and other partners have combined to fund this plan for the future of the site, the Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan.

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

Location

The Kettle Creek battlefield site sits in Wilkes County in northeast Georgia, roughly an hour's drive west of Augusta and about two hours' drive east from Atlanta (see Figures 1.3 and 1.4). Kettle Creek is roughly 20 miles north of Interstate 20 and is a few miles from State Road 44, a

Figure 1.3

⬢ Kettle Creek

— Wilkes County

Kettle Creek Battlefield Location

0   30   60   120
Miles

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

Figure 1.4

Rayle

Washington

State Road 44

⁑ Kettle Creek

— Cities

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Location

0	1.25	2.5	5
Miles

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

rural two-lane road. The surrounding area is largely rural and dotted with many small cities and towns, including Washington, a municipality of roughly 4,000 residents and the nearest city to the battlefield.

The site is within easy reach of several metropolitan areas. In addition to Atlanta and Augusta and Savannah in Georgia, these include Charleston, Columbia and Greenville/Spartanburg in South Carolina, Charlotte in North Carolina and Chattanooga in Tennessee. More than 10 million people live within a few hours' drive of the battlefield. The immediate access to the site comes from State Road 44, which connects to three county-owned roads that lead to the heart of the battlefield.

The surrounding area

Georgia's Piedmont is generally characterized by gently rolling hills and a heavily forested landscape and lies north of the fall line, which runs roughly from Augusta to Columbus. The area of eastern Georgia surrounding the battlefield is largely rural, and many counties have seen population loss during the last several decades, as residents have been pulled to metropolitan areas for job and other opportunities. The area immediately surrounding the battlefield is divided between agricultural and timber uses, with relatively sparse residential development found nearby.

Battlefield description

The Kettle Creek battlefield site consists of roughly a few hundred acres of land straddling the creek, a small waterway that empties into Clarks Hill Lake and the Savannah River. The battlefield is centered on a striking landscape feature, a prominent knoll called War Hill. A precise measurement of the battlefield is not possible, but the "core area" as defined by an archaeological study consists of 189 acres, most of which is on the north side of the creek (see Figure 1.5). The site includes extremely varied topography, ranging from the creek and surrounding floodplain to War Hill, the knoll where the battle's crucial events took place and which towers dramatically over the rest of the site (see Figure 1.6). Much of the land where the battle took place is wooded, with significant amounts of this area used for the cultivation of timber.

A small portion of the battlefield is owned by Wilkes County, which holds 14.5 acres of War Hill. This land includes a monument and informational markers and is accessible by War Hill Road, a

Figure 1.5

Note: Core area consists of area defined by 2008 archaeological survey of Kettle Creek battlefield

* War Hill/monuments

County property

Core area

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Public Property Ownership

0   0.125   0.25   0.5
                                 Miles

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

Figure 1.6. War Hill (view from the south side of the hill).

gravel road maintained by Wilkes County. There currently are no official trails on the public property, although battlefield advocates have created an informal trail around a portion of the base of the hill. The surrounding land is owned by private landowners and is not accessible to visitors to the battlefield. This report will describe the current condition of the battlefield in more detail in Chapter 3.

Plan development

The creation of the battlefield master plan emerged from an effort of Kettle Creek battlefield advocates to create a vision for the preserving and improving the visitor experience at the site. It became clear that the process of creating a plan would help clarify goals, set priorities and lay the foundation for successfully securing funding for the site. The Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission assumed the task of developing the plan. Funding came from a combination of sources, including the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and Wilkes County, which formally contracted with the Regional Commission to perform the plan. The plan development process was conducted with the assistance of an Advisory Committee formed specifically for the planning effort. The members of the committee readily agreed to contribute their time, energy and ideas toward the goal of creating a lasting vision for the park. The planning effort officially began on July 1, 2012 and concluded in the spring of 2013.

Preliminary project goals

At the outset of this project, some general goals were understood as desired outcomes of the planning process and subsequent plan implementation. These goals represent an initial assessment of the clients' desires for the project and were subject to revision during the process of engaging stakeholders and researching the site. While the changes were relatively modest, a finalized listing of goals can be found in Chapter 6, Goals and Objectives. The following represent the initial project goals:

- **Preserve land.** While most of the area is still undeveloped, there are no guarantees for the future. Protecting the core battlefield area, shown in Figure 1.5, is fundamental to the project.

- **Interpret history.** A successful battlefield park provides visitors with both the ability to walk the land where the battle took place while gaining a clear understanding of what occurred, why it happened as it did, and what it meant.

- **Generate tourism and economic activity.** Wilkes County and surrounding areas are in need of new economic drivers – and tourism generated by the development of the battlefield park would produce an economic boost. Wilkes County and Washington already boast of a number of significant historical resources, so the potential exists to grow the area as a destination for "heritage tourists," who tend to spend more than the average tourist. The battlefield at Ninety Six, South Carolina, a National Park Service site, brought in more than $3 million to that community in 2010, according to an NPS study.

Figure 1.7 and Figure 1.8. Before-and-after views of possible interpretive trail around War Hill. A paved surface would make the trail accessible to all visitors; wayside signs would provide interpretation.

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Plan structure

This document is intended as a master plan to guide the preservation and improvements to the battlefield site. The plan is not intended as a means of telling a detailed history of the park; while it includes a summary, more detailed information is available elsewhere. It also is not a guide to the specific techniques – text, photos and so on – for conveying the history in interpretive exhibits or signs. Finally, it does not present a detailed engineering plan for the site. The exact location and design of roads, trails, buildings and other features is beyond the scope of this plan.

This plan is intended as a guide to both short- and long-term decisions involving the preservation of the battlefield and the improvement of the visitor experience at the park. Broadly speaking, it covers several main topics, including:

- acquisition – whether through outright purchase or easement – of land on and near the battlefield.

- the development and general location of infrastructure for the site, such as roads, parking and similar facilities.

- telling of the story of the battle through means such as interpretive trails, a visitors' center and similar improvements;

- ownership and management of the park.

This document includes the following chapters:

1) **Background and Vision**. Introduction and overview of the project.

2) **History and Context**. A brief summary of the events of the battle, intended as a means to provide context to users of this document.

3) **Conditions Analysis**. A look at the current condition of the battlefield, the surrounding area, investments, community resources and other relevant factors.

4) **Implementation Resources and Models for Development**. A listing and description of funding and other resources potentially available for Kettle Creek. The chapter also includes broad models for the development of a historic site, based on case studies of similar battlefields.

5) **Preservation and Improvement Plan**. This chapter makes up the core of this document. It includes a final version of goals for the project, methods for acquiring land and preserving the battlefield and means for improving the visitor experience at the park. Recommendations are divided into short-term and medium/long-term steps and strategies.

6) **Implementation Program**. Recommended near-term steps, including a detailed short-term work program.

Appendices. Additional information, including case studies of other battlefields, public input and cost estimates.

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

CHAPTER 2:
HISTORY AND CONTEXT

JOHN DOOLY

TO ROBERT CARRS FORT

ANDREW PICKENS

ADVANCED GUARD

ELIJAH CLARKE

LOYALIST CAMP

BOYD

TO PHILLIPS FORT
WRIGHTSBOROUGH and
AUGUSTA

The BATTLE of KETTLE CREEK

14 February, 1779

REBEL FORCES
ANDREW PICKENS – 200 MEN
JOHN DOOLY AND ELIJAH CLARKE – 140 MEN

LOYALIST FORCES
COLONEL BOYD

TRAIL

STREAMS and CANE SWAMP

WOODS

"I am Just Returned from the Back parts where I seed Eight Thousand men in arms all with Riffeld Barrill guns which they can hit the Bigness of a Dollar between Two & Three hundreds yards Distance the Little Boys not Bigger than my self has all their Guns & marches with their Fathers & all their Cry is Liberty or Death Dear Godfather tell all my Country people not to come here for the Americans will kill them Like Dear in the Woods … "– Letter from Baika Harvey, a young Scottish immigrant to Georgia, to his godfather in 1775

The Battle of Kettle Creek represents one of the most significant Revolutionary War engagements to take place in Georgia. A force of some 400 Patriots routed a much larger militia of Loyalist troops rounded up from the backcountry of the Carolinas. While the sheer numbers of troops involved were not as great as in some other Revolutionary War battles, the victory here plainly foreshadowed the difficulties the British would have in carrying out their Southern strategy of rallying Loyalists to the crown.

This chapter aims to provide a brief orientation to the battle and its implications for the war. For those interested in a more detailed recounting of the events of that day, additional resources are listed in the appendix. The chapter also includes a history of the site since the battle and illustrates ongoing efforts to preserve the battlefield and better tell its story.

Historic overview

The war turns South

By early 1779, the American Revolutionary War had taken a distinctly southern tone. Fighting in the northern colonies had essentially ended in a stalemate, leading the British to adopt a different strategy. They "now rekindled a plan for putting down the rebellion by first controlling the southern colonies and then sweeping north to total victory."[1] War planners believed the South was a potential hot-

Figure 2.1. Diagram of battle from 1926 study. Ashmore and Olmstead.

bed of Loyalists – local residents who sympathized with the King and who could be rallied to arms by a demonstration of British might. The hope was to generate a Loyalist militia that would dampen revolutionary enthusiasm in the region and bolster the regular troops in their efforts. This strategy paid early dividends, with Savannah falling to British troops in the winter of 1778-79.[2] With control of coastal Georgia secured by the victory in Savannah, the British looked to the interior. British commander Archibald Campbell began plunging into the Georgia backcountry. His aim: To be the first British officer to "rend a star and a stripe from the flag of Congress."[3]

Figure 2.2. Andrew Pickens.   Figure 2.3. Archibald Campbell.

By early 1779, this strategy appeared likely to bear significant fruit. "Campbell's army had taken the City of Augusta without a fight, and he later reported that over 1,100 Georgians had taken an oath to the King."[4] Campbell had sent a number of officers throughout the region with instructions to quickly raise an army. One of these officers, Colonel John Boyd, raised some 800 militia members from the Carolinas in defense of the crown, then marched into Georgia with the aim of joining Campbell's force.[5] Boyd and his men were pursued, however, by a smaller force of Patriot militia from the Carolinas and Georgia under the command of Colonel Andrew Pickens.[6]

The battle

On the morning of Feb. 14, 1779, Boyd's men had stopped on the banks of Kettle Creek, apparently to supplement their food supply by taking cattle from a nearby farm. "Not suspecting any danger, the Loyalists left their horses to graze and began butchering the cattle."[7] The Patriots, however, had sent out scouts who returned information on the whereabouts of Boyd's force. Despite the numerical disadvantage, Pickens decided to attack. Advancing toward the creek from the north, he divided his force into three wings in order to create a pincer movement. (See Figures 2.4 and 2.5 on the following pages for visual depictions of the flow of the battle). While they failed to create complete surprise, the Loyalists were largely unprepared for the assault. Positioned on a hill overlooking the Patriot approach, they initially held their ground – but a rapid reversal would soon turn the tide of the battle. Despite the fact that the Loyalists claimed higher ground, their forces crumbled when three Patriot militia members fired on Boyd, fatally wounding him. "The Loyalists were routed from their camp, abandoning most of their baggage and horses as they fled across the rain swollen creek."[8]

Despite the initial setback and ensuing chaos, the Loyalists did manage to begin reforming on the south side of Kettle Creek. The terrain along the creek gave them time, as many of the Patriots were "caught in the cane swamps on each side of the Loyalists."[9] Finally, a sizable number of the Patriots crossed the creek and engaged in a prolonged and heavy firefight on the south side of the creek. After roughly a half-hour of intense fighting, the remaining Loyalists were driven from the field.[10] After some two hours of fighting, the Patriots had claimed a lopsided victory over a force nearly twice their size.

The defeat for the Loyalists was complete. While fewer than 100 soldiers from the original 800-strong militia group were killed or wounded, 150 others were captured, and most of the rest fled. By contrast, about 30 Patriot soldiers were killed or wounded. Moreover, less than a third of Boyd's original Loyalist militia would ever unite with the British army.[11] Most simply melted away into the countryside, returning to their homes and farm duties. The prisoners, by contrast, were marched to Augusta, then to Ninety-Six, South Carolina, where they were tried. Of those prisoners, seventy received a sentence of death, but most were ultimately spared.[12]

The phases of battle

1

Approaching the hill

2

The fighting begins

Figure 2.4. Source: Steven J. Rauch maps.

The phases of battle

3

Boyd falls; tide turns

4

Driven from the field

Figure 2.4. Steven J. Rauch maps.

Figure 2.5

Patriot forces divide

Boyd
falls

Patriot forces reunite

Path of Loyalists' retreat

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Tracing the Battle

▪ ▪ ▪ ▪ ▪	Pickens/Joint Patriot forces	
▪ ▪ ▪ ▪ ▪	Dooly	
▪ ▪ ▪ ▪ ▪	Clarke	
✳	War Hill/Monuments	

0   0.125   0.25   0.5
                          Miles

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

Location of events based
on 2008 survey

The aftermath

The battle cannot be said to have turned the tide of the war in a strictly military sense. Less than three weeks later, a Loyalist militia crushed a Patriot force at Brier Creek, roughly halfway between Augusta and Savannah. Other defeats followed, including major British triumphs at Charleston and Camden, South Carolina. And yet Kettle Creek, seen in retrospect, takes on a symbolic significance that goes beyond the immediate military triumph. It plainly illustrated that the South would be far less fertile ground than the British had imagined. The groundswell of Loyalists never materialized in the numbers war planners had hoped to see, and the willingness of Georgians to take up arms against the King ensured that Patriot forces could at least match the Loyalist militias. As one description puts it, "The commanding officers … were immediately disappointed and surprised by the lack of dependable Loyalists support in the South. This put a damper on British ambitions of a quick victory in the South."[13] This fact is key. Given the inherent difficulties in attempting to subdue rebellious colonies across thousands of miles of ocean, the longer the Patriots dragged out the war, the less likely the political will to continue the struggle would exist in London. The fact that the first major test of this strategy was a stunning defeat surely carried psychological implications that resonated through the South, affecting the decisions of settlers who might have been on the fence about where their allegiances truly lay – or how deeply to jump into the growing conflict.

Figure 2.6. Sketch of the battle. (Kettle Creek Daughters of the American Revolution)

In fact, it represented the first of a series of setbacks for the British – Kings Mountain, Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse (a technical victory for the British but at a very high cost) that ultimately led to the end of the war. A nearly straight line leads from Kettle Creek to the British surrender at Yorktown, both in the geographical flow of the war and in terms of the larger forces that ultimately

spelled defeat for the British. Even apart from the larger context, the battle is significant simply for the completeness of the Patriot victory. As Pickens later put it, Kettle Creek represented "the severest check and chastisement the Tories ever received in Georgia or South Carolina."[14]

Figure 2.7. Surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown.

Assessment of relative significance

Comparing one battlefield to others in terms of historic significance is not simple and involves subjective factors. While the importance of some battles is plainly obvious – Fort Sumter or Gettysburg, for instance – in many cases, the answer for other battles is less clear. The simple fact that a battlefield has been preserved or has well-developed visitor facilities does not necessarily mean it is more significant than a battle site without those qualities. It might mean only that more resources were available in a certain place, or at a certain time, or that a battlefield had the right champion. The fact that Kettle Creek is currently largely unpreserved and without visitor facilities should not be taken as an assessment of its historic importance. As seen in a review of the history of the battle and subsequent events, it played an important role in the flow of the Revolutionary War.

The most recent comprehensive assessment of battlefields across the United States took place in 2007, when the National Park Service issued a "Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States." The effort involved a review of nearly 3,000 events related to the wars and assessed levels of historic significance to each. Most sites were assigned to Class D, which involved sites with purely local significance. Kettle Creek was assigned a C and placed in a group of sites deemed to have broader importance. "The 677 sites in Classes A, B, and C are associated with events that had a demonstrable influence on the course,

conduct, and results of the Revolutionary War or the War of 1812," the report stated.[15]

The battle's significance in Georgia is even more clear. The battle stands – along with the British capture of Savannah in 1778 – as one of the few major Revolutionary War events in the state, and certainly represents the most important Patriot victory in Georgia.

The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

CHAPTER 3:
CONDITIONS
ANALYSIS

Overview

A critical initial step in forming a plan for the future – for a town, a business, a battlefield – involves a thorough examination of what currently exists. This chapter evaluates the current state of the Kettle Creek battlefield. The review includes a look not only at the site itself and of neighboring properties, but of other related conditions, groups and activities – marketing, community support, events, and more. These assets can be just as important as the actual site. In some cases, the site itself may be in good condition, but there may be few other assets – interested community members, engaged local governments – on which to build. Conversely, a site may not be in the best condition, but if it possesses a group of champions working toward improving it, its future can be bright.

In this case, Kettle Creek is fortunate enough to possess both dedicated advocates and significant physical assets. The quietude and relatively undeveloped nature of the site means that visitors can easily send themselves back in time to imagine the scene of the battle. Moreover, the battlefield also boasts of deep support from both the community and from those beyond Wilkes County who value historic places.

Prior research

Research – historical and otherwise – is a critical ingredient in the planning process for historic sites. This requirement is particularly critical for battlefield projects. Unlike a house or other physical structure, the boundaries and events of a battle are not necessarily evident, particularly after centuries have elapsed. The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan project is fortunate to be able to build on an extensive amount of prior research and writing. These efforts, which span a period of at least several decades, have gone a great distance toward laying the foundation for the master plan effort. In examining the history of the site, this chapter drew upon three main sources:

1) "Kettle Creek: The Battle of the Cane Brakes, Wilkes County, Georgia," by Robert S. Davis, Jr. and Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr.

This remains the most the most thorough history of the battle. The document, written in 1974 for the Historic Preservation Section (now Division) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, drew on a number of sources to create a definitive modern history. The document carefully analyzes

the events of the battle, discussing the location of troop movements and key events during the fighting. It also places the battle in a broader context, looking at events leading up to the conflict.

2) National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form.

This document, which led to the battlefield's listing in the National Register, was prepared in 1975 by Kenneth H. Thomas Jr., one of the authors of the previously mentioned study. It contains a well-executed summary of the history and significance of the battle. It also includes maps showing the location of the battle and priorities for land acquisition.

3) "Stirring Up a Hornet's Nest: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Survey." LAMAR Institute Publication Series, Report Number 131. Daniel T. Elliot, principal investigator and author.

This survey was done in 2008 with funding from the National Park Service's Preserve America program. It combined an intensive survey of the physical terrain of the battlefield with a thorough review of historic research. The field work used techniques such as metal detection and ground-penetrating radar to physically determine the location of events during the battle and the overall flow of the events during the battle. It provides very valuable information on which to base decisions about the location of interpretive trails, acquisition of property, the siting of facilities and other location-dependent considerations.

Site history

The area encompassing the battlefield remained in private hands for more than a century after war's end. Nearby residents, of course, knew what had happened there, and knowledge of the battle was passed down and recorded in various written forms as well. The battlefield also began appearing on maps of the area, with the first known map showing the location appearing in 1847.

Given the ongoing recognition of the battle, and with efforts to preserve Civil War battlefields and battlefields in general growing in popularity toward the end of the 19th century, interest rose in preserving the Kettle Creek site itself. In 1900, the Wilkes County Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution purchased 12.5 acres at the heart of the battlefield using $75 in donated funds. After lobbying for decades for greater recognition of the battle, the DAR successfully persuaded the federal government to erect a monument on the preserved land in 1930. This effort also

included the installation of signs showing troop movements, none of which still exist. At a dedication ceremony on June 6, 1930, guests included the chief of staff of the U.S. Army, the Georgia secretary of state and the descendants of many of the Patriots who fought in the battle.

Following the installation of the monument, the site continued much as it had until 1960, when the DAR transferred the land to Wilkes County, which has continued to own the site since then. During the 1960s, a group called the Kettle Creek Battlefield Commission became active, with the goal of creating "a first rate park at the site." The group erected a marker and seemed to generate new enthusiasm for telling the story of the battle. A 1962 reenactment drew guests including the governor, secretary of state and a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. This energy led in the 1970s to an effort to have Kettle Creek become part of the National Park Service. This effort fell short, but the site was successfully listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

In recent years, the battlefield has remained much as it was decades ago. The land surrounding the small part of the battlefield owned by Wilkes County is still in private hands, much of it used for timber production, although two additional acres have been added to the county's holdings. In recent years, a new advocacy group, the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association, formed and is working toward preserving the battlefield in its entirety and better telling the story of the battle at the site.

Determination of battlefield area

This plan relies on the 2008 archaeological study for its definition of the battlefield area. The study identified a 189-acre "core area" (Figures 3.1 and 3.2) that includes the land where the fighting took place. This area contains the most significant resources related to the battle and is considered the priority for land acquisition efforts. This plan does consider a broader geographical area in its research and analysis, however, including land adjacent to the core area and related sites in the general vicinity of the battlefield.

Ownership

A 14.5-acre section of the battlefield is owned by Wilkes County (Figure 3.3). This includes most of War Hill, with the exception of part of the northeast quadrant. The remainder of the site is owned privately. In recent years, several properties on which the battle occurred have changed ownership. While future plans for those parcels are unclear, and while there does not appear to be a market for

Figure 3.1

Patriot forces divide

Boyd falls

Patriot forces reunite

Path of Loyalists' retreat

Note: Core area consists of area defined by 2008 archaeological survey of Kettle Creek battlefield

Pickens/Joint Patriot forces

Dooly

Clarke

Battlefield core area

Kettle Creek Battlefield

Identifying the Core Area

0   0.125   0.25   0.5
                              Miles

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

Location of events based on 2008 survey

Figure 3.2

Battlefield Core Area

War Hill Road

Note: Core area consists of area defined by 2008 archaeological survey of Kettle Creek battlefield

Battlefield core area

Kettle Creek Battlefield

Battlefield Core Area

0   0.125   0.25   0.5
                                        Miles

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

Figure 3.3

War Hill Road

Note: Core area consists of area defined by 2008 archaeological survey of Kettle Creek battlefield

War Hill/Monuments

Wilkes County property

Battlefield core area

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Core Area/Public Property Ownership

0   0.125   0.25   0.5 Miles

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

Figure 3.4

019 006. 164 ac.

019 006. 164 ac.

019 005. 103 ac.

030 003. 399 ac.

030 005. 46 ac.

019 033. 180 ac.

030 003B. 401 ac.

019 034. 106 ac.

030 003A. 468 ac.

019 039. 456 ac.

030 015. 207 ac.

030 013. 162 ac.

020 008. 563 ac.

Note: Core area consists of area defined by 2008 archaeological survey of Kettle Creek battlefield

✳ War Hill/Monuments

— Battlefield core area

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Property Ownership

| 0 | 0.25 | 0.5 | 1 |
Miles

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activities that would harm the integrity of the battlefield – housing subdivisions, commercial development – the transactions point out the importance of securing the battlefield for the future.

Access

The Kettle Creek battlefield site sits in a largely rural section of Georgia, well apart from the state's booming urban centers. The site is located close to the eastern border of Georgia, roughly 100 miles east of Atlanta, and roughly between the cities of Athens and Augusta. More specifically, it sits several miles east-southeast of Washington, Georgia, in a rural section of Wilkes County. This location presents both advantages and disadvantages. While the site is relatively close – about 17 miles – north of Interstate 20, it is not a short drive from the interstate. The meandering trip takes roughly 25 minutes. Additionally, because Augusta lies just beyond an

Figure 3.5. War Hill Road.

hour's drive from the battlefield, the population within that one-hour-drive radius is relatively small. Much of it is contained in Athens, nearly an hour away. These same factors, however, are what give the site its defining character. The lack of urban development in the area has kept both the battlefield and the surrounding areas as well as nearby cities such as Washington largely free of the distracting visual clutter of typical urban or suburban areas.

The site is accessed by War Hill Road, an unpaved county-owned road that runs 1.2 miles to the battlefield site from the east (Figures 3.5 and 3.6). War Hill Road is linked to State Road 44 by short sections of two other roads, Court Ground Road and Stoney Ridge Road. The county's right-of-way on War Hill Road extends 5,838 feet, from Court Ground Road to War Hill itself. The width of the right-of-way varies, ranging from approximately 12 feet to wider in some places. A second potential access, New Salem Church Road, approaches the battlefield from the south but does not cross Kettle Creek or reach the county-owned property, meaning some form of bridge would be necessary. The county's right-of-way on New Salem Church Road is approximately 12

Figure 3.6

War Hill Road

Court Ground Road

Stoney Ridge Road

New Salem Church Road

State Road 44

War Hill/Monuments

Core battlefield area

Current road access

Kettle Creek Battlefield

Road Access to Site

0   0.5   1   2
                                   Miles

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

feet wide, and the exact length is unclear. Determining the precise dimensions of the public right-of-way on both roads is an important step to prepare for future improvements.

Cultural and natural resources at the site

Two competing factors have combined to create the current landscape at the Kettle Creek site. On one hand, the lack of development in the area has meant that valuable historic and natural resources have not been lost under subdivisions or strip malls. On the other, the sheer time elapsed since the battle, as well as timbering and agricultural activities at the site, has meant that some structures and features have not survived. On the whole, the site offers a range of both natural and cultural features that tell the story of the battle and create an idyllic setting for visitors. Many of these should be incorporated into a battlefield park, and their location shaped recommendations in with respect to property acquisition and interpretation.

The following is a listing of many of the most significant existing cultural and natural resources on and immediately surrounding the battlefield site (Figure 3.8 shows locations, several derived from the 2008 survey).

Figure 3.7. Kettle Creek

A) Kettle Creek

The creek (Figure 3.7) remains one of the core features of the site and played an important role in the battle itself, which took place on both sides of the waterway. Kettle Creek generally flows in a northwest-to-southeast direction through the site on its way to Clarks Hill Lake, some 15 miles distant. The creek flows through a deep channel that at times is nearly dry, but it has historically been susceptible to flooding. The creek was dredged and rechanneled in the area of the battle during the 1920s as part of a flood control effort. The location of the original creekbed is north of the existing creek. The location is suggested by the topography but is not clearly marked on historic maps that indicate its previous route.

Figure 3.8

A) Kettle Creek
B) War Hill
C) Kelly Branch of Kettle Creek
D) Wrightsborough Road location
E) Hammett's Farm (approximate)
F) Former home sites
G) Possible Liberty Church site
H) War Hill monuments
I) Grave markers

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Existing Cultural and Natural Resources

0   0.125   0.25   0.5
Miles

Note: Text and photographs pertaining to the individual resources can be found on pages 36-41.

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B) War Hill

War Hill towers more than 80 feet over the creek and provides a striking physical presence to the battlefield (Figures 3.9 and 3.10). While the slope on the north side is gentle, the hill slopes steeply down to the creek to the south. From this side, the hill looms dramatically over the landscape. The hilltop marks the end of War Hill Road and includes an area where vehicles sometimes park. Wilkes County currently owns 14.5 acres of the hill, with a portion of the northeast corner owned privately.

In some descriptions of the site, the terms "War Hill" and "Monument Hill" are both used, sometimes interchangeably, with Monument Hill referring specifically to the higher knoll on which the monuments sit and War Hill

Figure 3.9. War Hill.

Figure 3.10. War Hill, looking north from the summit.

referring to a broader area of high ground. Over time, though, War Hill has generally come to be used to describe the hill that includes the monument area, and this document follows that tradition.

C) Kelly Branch of Kettle Creek

This small tributary to Kettle Creek approaches War Hill from the north and curves around the hill in a counter-clockwise direction before merging with the creek.

D) Wrightsborough Road

This road connected the battle-field site with the settlement of Wrightsborough (or Wrightsboro) and also likely represented the path taken by Loyalists flee-ing the battle. Present-day New Salem Church Road (Figure 3.11) follows the path of part of Wrightsborough Road.

Figure 3.11. New Salem Church Road, which runs along the same path as the old Wrightsborough Road.

E) Hammett's farm

According to the 2008 archaeo-logical survey, the battlefield was largely fought on land belonging to James Hammett, who owned 450 acres on the north side of Kettle Creek at the time of the battle. The farmhouse likely was lo-cated on a ridge just northwest of War Hill. This also may have been near the cow pen where the Loyalist troops stopped to slaughter cows before the battle.

F) Former home sites

At least three former home sites are present in the area, according to the archaeological survey, with at least one dating back possibly to the 1700s.

G) Liberty Church site

This Presbyterian church was established in 1783, after the battle, on land that was part of the battlefield. The site in-cluded a log church and cemetery that might have contained the graves of Ket-tle Creek soldiers or veterans. The church, however, was abandoned in

Figure 3.12. Second building at former Liberty Church site. Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1964.

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Figure 3.13. War Hill monuments. Clockwise from top left, monument listing Patriot soldiers who fought in the battle; the original 1930 monument erected by the federal government; and Georgia Historic Marker describing the events of the battle.

1808. A 2008 archeological study was unable to confirm the exact location of the church, but earlier reports placed it near War Hill.

H) War Hill memorials

The various memorials (Figure 3.13) on War Hill, which date back more than 80 years, merit discussion in their own right. The most prominent is the monument, which stands atop War Hill and was erected in 1930 by the federal government. The hilltop also contains a memorial to Patriot soldiers, including the names of many of the soldiers who fought in the battle. The also includes a Georgia Historical Marker, a handsome sign that provides a brief history of the battle.

I) The grave markers

The top of War Hill also contains a small section of grave markers, which represent a relatively re-

Figure 3.14. Grave and grave marker area atop War Hill.

cent addition to the site (Figure 3.14). A few mark the site of where the remains of Kettle Creek veterans were reinterred in recent decades. Others are simply markers but do not reflect actual grave sites. Most of the markers are for Revolutionary War soldiers who did not fight at Kettle Creek.

Current condition of battlefield

The battlefield itself consists of a set of hills and ridges surrounding Kettle Creek and a small tributary. The bulk of the action took place close to or on what is called War Hill. The small hill rises gradually from the surrounding land to the east, then drops off steeply and dramatically to the northwest. Atop the hill are the few improvements that have been added to the site over the years. These consist of a monument, a sign that gives a condensed history of the battle, a listing of the soldiers known to have participated in the battle, and a small collection of headstones.

Soils are generally well-draining, with a surface layer of loam several inches deep. The subsoil is clayey, and bedrock is more than 8 feet deep.

The majority of the site lies at between 440 and 520 feet above sea level. The highest point is atop War Hill, the lowest follows Kettle Creek around the hill. A series of ridgelines running in a generally north-south direction are found on both sides of the creek.

Public holdings include 14.5 acres of the battlefield currently owned by Wilkes County. The rest of the battlefield and surrounding properties are privately owned. The dominant land use on the remainder of the battlefield and on nearby land is timber activity involving pine forests. The forests are at various stages of development. Some areas have been recently cleared. Others consist of somewhat older growth.

These activities mean the environment is generally quiet and free of most modern distractions. There have been negative consequences, however. The timber activity means that many of the archaeological resources potentially found at the site have been disturbed and are likely lost. Moreover, it also has created a monoculture in much of the area around the battlefield and creates a visual

impression far from that likely experienced at the time. While a goal of the project may be to restore the appearance of the battlefield to a state resembling that of the time of the conflict, this will necessarily be a longer-term goal and should not be a short-term priority or expectation.

The area surrounding the site is largely undeveloped. Only a handful of residences or structures are found near the battlefield. There are houses along a portion of the entranceway to the site on War Hill Road. There also are houses at the entrance to New Salem Church Road.

The site and surrounding lands are in unincorporated Wilkes County. The county's land use controls in the Kettle Creek area currently allow residential development on minimum lot sizes of one acre.

Existing investments

Relatively few investments have been made at the site. The access road is currently unpaved. No utilities are present at the site. No amenities for visitors currently exist. A small picnic area once existed but has not been improved in some time. However, some improvements have been made in addition to the monuments and memorials mentioned previously. Gates line the main entrance, and the road is maintained by the county. Volunteers have cleared and maintain an informal trail around the hill and have cleared undergrowth on the hill.

Still, by and large, few investments have been made, reflecting both the relatively constrained resources of its home community and the relatively small amount of attention it has received from the broader surrounding area.

The site currently is not served by any public utilities. The closest water and sewer facilities are several miles away in the city of Washington, and there are no plans at present to extend lines out to the area of the battlefield. Electrical lines run just to the west of War Hill and connecting them to the site would not represent a major obstacle. Extending other utilities to the site would involve considerable expense.

Related sites

The battlefield and surrounding areas contain a number of historic sites, shown in Figure 3.15, that help tell the story of the battle and Colonial history or at least provide additional attractions for

Figure 3.15

Rayle

Lincolnton

Washington D

E

Kettle Creek symbol

A

B

Crawfordville

I-20

C Thomson

Warrenton

N
W   E
S

✳ Kettle Creek

A) Phillips Mill Baptist Church
B) Carr's Fort (approximate)
C) The Rock House
D) Washington Historical Museum

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Related Sites

0   2   4   8   12   16
Miles

Note: Text and photographs pertaining to the individual resources can be found on pages 36-41.

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those interested in history. The area of the battle was still on the frontier but was in the process of being rapidly populated at the time of the Revolutionary War. The nearby city of Washington contains a historical museum as well as a number of other historic attractions. These sites offer the potential to help tell a broader history, the story of the war in the Georgia backcountry, and they provide tangible connections between Kettle Creek and other sites of interest to visitors. Recommendations in following chapters involve creating closer connections between Kettle Creek and these sites. The following are some of the significant related sites.

A) Phillips Mill Baptist Church

This church stands on the site where Liberty Church moved in 1834. The land was sold to the Baptist church in 1848. The current church stands near New Salem Church Road. The church's graveyard contains the graves of a number of Kettle Creek soldiers.

B) Carr's Fort

Figure 3.16. Phillips Mill Baptist Church.

This was one of a number of forts spread across the Wilkes County landscape at the time of the Revolutionary War, most originally built due to ongoing conflict between settlers and Native Americans. Carr's Fort likely sat just a few miles east of Kettle Creek, and served as a Patriot militia outpost during the war. The fort also played a role in the events leading up to Kettle Creek, as Loyalists claimed control of the fort earlier in February 1779. Andrew Pickens, the Patriot leader at Kettle Creek, briefly laid siege to the fort but then decided to pursue a larger Loyalist force, a move that led to the fight at Kettle Creek. In early 2013, The LAMAR Institute, which performed the Kettle Creek archeological survey, was in the midst of an effort to definitively locate the fort and find related artifacts. That effort, funded in part by an American Battlefield Protection Program grant, could provide another physical location to assist in telling the larger story of the war in the Georgia backcountry.

C) The Rock House

Figure 3.17. The Rock House, Thomson, Ga.

This is the sole remaining house related to the settlement of Wrightsborough (or Wrightsboro), a Quaker village formed a few years before the war. Wrightsborough, located in present-day McDuffie County, served as a hotbed of Loyalism and a base of operations during the war. Col. Boyd stopped in Wrightsborough a few weeks before the battle en route to forming the militia that ultimately would be defeated at Kettle Creek. The Rock House was a fortified dwelling built in the late 1700s and is currently available for tours. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

D) Washington Historical Museum

This historical museum covers in interpretive displays and period rooms more than two centuries of Wilkes County and Georgia history and is located near the historic heart of Washington. Presently, a small exhibit depicting the Battle of Kettle Creek and showing artifacts recovered during the 2008 archaeological survey is on display here. The house is a part of the Wasington Historic District, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Figure 3.18. Washington Historical Museum, Washington, Ga.

E) Elijah Clark State Park.

This park is located next to Clarks Hill Lake in neighboring Lincoln County. It is named for one of the Patriot commanders at Kettle Creek (Elijah Clarke's name was sometimes spelled without the "e") and includes a replica of his home.

Figure 3.19. Elijah Clarke State Park, Lincoln County, Ga.

Community and other resources

Marketing

Marketing of the site is currently rather limited, although local friends and advocates work hard to improve the battlefield's visibility. Most current marketing is done by Wilkes County-based organizations, such as the Washington-Wilkes Chamber of Commerce or Washington-Wilkes Historical Foundation. Such efforts necessarily are rather modest, consisting of information on websites or at offices, as well as word-of-mouth or other informal efforts.

The Kettle Creek Battlefield Association is working to increase marketing efforts. The group has been raising money for various purposes including marketing and is planning to print and distribute informational pamphlets at various locations across the state. The Georgia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution has printed brochures that tell the history of Kettle Creek and has distributed them to visitors' centers, schools and other locations.

The battlefield's primary marketing has been in the form of informal, word-of-mouth-style efforts as mentioned previously. These efforts play out primarily within Wilkes County and the immediate surrounding area but also across a broader area in the form of groups such as the Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution and other local and regional groups with a mission of battlefield and military history promotion and appreciation.

Given the enthusiastic but severely resource-constrained marketing efforts that have characterized the site's promotion in the past, marketing is an area in which the battlefield can take a large step forward in the future. Tapping into resources to fund additional marketing efforts can greatly raise the site's profile. This also could create a virtuous cycle, in which the greater awareness of the key

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role the battle played and the high quality of the visitor experience of the site leads to additional interest and additional tools and resources for further marketing efforts.

Events

The anniversary of the Battle of Kettle Creek is commemorated on the second weekend of February each year. Events take place throughout a three-day observation and include reenactments, opportunities to learn about the battle and colonial life, and a wreath-laying ceremony at the battlefield. The weekend draws hundreds of visitors from multiple states and represents an opportunity for battlefield preservation advocates to connect with the broader community.

Figure 3.20. Events during anniversary celebration, 2008.

Community support

The battlefield has long experienced strong support from the community. The activities of the Kettle Creek chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution directly led to the preservation of the core of the battlefield in 1900, and the group has led the push for continued recognition and improvements in the decades since.

In recent years, this support has grown stronger. A Washington-Wilkes chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution formed recently and has been advocating for the battlefield. A separate group, called the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association, incorporated in 2011 and has been active in advocating for the park and working to raise its profile.

Local government has also been supportive. Wilkes County contributed financially to this plan, and representatives from both the county and the city of Washington served on the Advisory Committee formed for this planning process. Wilkes County also maintains War Hill Road and has made other contributions to the site. The Washington-Wilkes Chamber of Commerce and other local groups also support the battlefield in a number of ways, including helping to organize the annual celebration, participating in this planning effort, marketing and more.

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Chapter 3: Conditions Analysis

Threats to battlefield integrity

As previously emphasized, one of the key assets of the battlefield is the relatively undeveloped state of the site and its surroundings. That does not mean, however, that there are no potential threats to the battlefield's historic integrity. Unlike some prominent battlefields, there is little short-term risk of residential or other urban or suburban development on or near the site. This is always a possibility in the future, however, as long as the site remains in private hands.

Moreover, the site also risks damage from timber activity in the future. There is no evidence that current or former landowners have acted less than responsibly, but the activities inherent to timbering and agriculture mean that archaeological evidence that could help tell the story of the battle likely has been lost in the past and will continue to be lost in the future.

In the 2007 "Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States," previously mentioned in Chapter 2 of this document, the National Park Service reviewed the importance and condition of more than 3000 sites related to the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. It concluded that Kettle Creek faced a low short-term threat but a medium long-term threat.

In recent years, a number of nearby parcels have changed hands, potentially limiting purchases in at least the short-term. While there likely is no market demand for activities that could seriously damage the integrity of the battlefield, the fact that only a small portion is publicly owned means that there are no guarantees in the long term.

Community analysis

Year	Wilkes County Population
1930	15,944
1950	12,388
1970	10,184
1990	10,597
2000	10,687
2010	10,595

Figure 3.21.

Wilkes County is a small, largely rural county roughly between the Augusta and Athens metropolitan areas. Like many of Georgia's rural counties outside metro Atlanta, it has been gradually losing population over the last several decades. This process was driven by gains in agricultural productivity as well as the broader population and job shift to urbanized areas. The trend seems to have slowed in recent

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

decades, but the county experienced a slight population loss during the last decade, according to Census data (Figure 3.21).

The county's economy has traditionally been driven by manufacturing and farming, but employment in those sectors has been declining in recent decades. Health care and other sectors may fill in some of the gaps left if manufacturing continues to decline. Like many other counties in this region of Georgia, the unemployment rate in Wilkes County is higher than the state's average. In September 2012, the rate in Wilkes County was 10.5 percent, compared to 8.6 for the state as a whole.

While Wilkes County is similar to neighboring counties in many ways, it is distinct in one important way as well. As one of the eight original counties of Georgia (land from Wilkes was carved out into several smaller counties in subsequent years) it has significant historical resources, particularly in the city of Washington, the county seat. A 1997 historic resources survey found 581 historic buildings in the city, with 203 dating back to before 1900 and 54 built before the start of the Civil War. Wilkes County has 30 properties or historic districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places, with 25 of these in the city of Washington. That figure includes five separate historic districts in the city of Washington. In 2004, the Washington Historic District, a citywide historic district, combined 10 individual properties and four historic districts previously listed in the National Register of Historic Places into an expanded boundary to take in 499 contributing properties. This wealth of historic resources positions the area well for increased history-based tourism in the future.

Economic impact

The current economic impact of Kettle Creek is difficult to measure but is likely modest. An exact count of visitors to the site during the year is not available. However, The Wilkes-Washington Chamber of Commerce estimates that perhaps half or more of the roughly 250 monthly visitors to its Welcome Center visit the Kettle Creek site. That would suggest at least 1,500 visits a year to the site, and since not all visitors stop at the Welcome Center, the actual total is higher. Additionally, some 300 visitors typically attend the annual Revolutionary Days celebration in February, according to the Chamber. Some estimates put 350 visitors at War Hill during the wreath-laying ceremony in 2013. Many of these visitors are not from the area and likely spend significant amounts on hotel rooms and meals.

Chapter 3: Conditions Analysis

While the current impact is modest, the example of battlefield and other historic sites across the country indicates that the potential is high. Historic-related or so-called "heritage" tourism is increasingly becoming a significant economic driver in many communities across the United States. While tourism in general can be a valuable economic sector, there are reasons to conclude that heritage tourism creates even more of an impact. According to studies, cultural or historical travelers stay longer and spend more money than tourists in general, or $623 per trip compared to the average of $457. A study by Civil War Preservation Trust found visitors spend $51.58 per person per day. While that study focused only on visitors to Civil War historic sites, it seems reasonable to assume that visitors to Revolutionary War sites would be substantially similar. Projecting attendance at a future attraction is an inexact science at best, and this section does not attempt to do so for Kettle Creek. However, a look at some other Revolutionary War battlefield sites at least provides some reference points (Figure 3.22).

Battle	Attendance (average 2007-2011)	Operator
Camden	(not recorded)	Palmetto Conservation Foundation
Cowpens	221,523	National Park Service
Moore's Creek	55,633	National Park Service
Ninety Six	55,087	National Park Service

Figure 3.22. Battlefield park attendance.

All four of those battlefields are similar in some respects to Kettle Creek. All took place in the South (Moore's Creek in North Carolina and Camden, Cowpens and Ninety Six in South Carolina) and all are located in relatively rural areas and are not particularly near larger cities. In terms of historic significance, Cowpens clearly takes the lead, a fact likely reflected in the attendance figures, while the other three battles occupy relatively the same territory. Whether a Kettle Creek battlefield park would match the attendance from Moore's Creek or Ninety Six is an open question. Both are operated by the National Park Service, which provides a level of visibility and quality assurance that is difficult to match. Camden, which only recently was acquired with preservation in mind, is unstaffed and does not maintain attendance figures. It is unlikely that attendance is significant there.

Clearly, the level of attendance and therefore economic impact depends on to what extent the park is developed and marketed. One recommendation to follow is to add a counting strip or other

means of collecting attendance figures. It is likely that there would be at least an interim phase where the state of the park and attendance would more closely resemble that of Camden. But it is possible that at some point the park could more closely resemble the current state of Moore's Creek or Ninety Six. If that were the case, the economic impact to Wilkes County would be substantial. According to the National Park Service, the total spending by out-of-community visitors to Ninety Six National Historic Site was $3.0 million in 2010, a number that directly or indirectly supported 48 jobs in the community.

Projecting those figures to Wilkes County in the presence of an improved Kettle Creek battle site is difficult to perform with any degree of certainty, but if the site were able to attract even a third of Ninety Six's visitor levels, that could translate into a $1 million economic impact annually.

The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

CHAPTER 4:

IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES AND MODELS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Overview

This chapter seeks to identify possible resources – whether sources of funding or other forms of support – for the preservation and improvement of the Kettle Creek battlefield. It also examines possible models for land acquisition, ownership and other key functions. This is done through case studies of two other nearby battlefields. The findings are summarized in this chapter, while the details of the case studies are provided in Appendix B.

Implementation resources

Obviously, even the best plans cannot succeed without tangible resources needed to implement them. While this document seeks to outline a vision for the future of the Kettle Creek battlefield and to identify the steps needed to realize that vision, substantial and varied resources will be needed to make that a reality. This section seeks to catalogue and describe potential resources – whether in the form of financing, people or governments – and analyze their relevance to the project.

Public funding sources

A) Transportation Alternatives

This federal grant program, formerly called Transportation Enhancements, provides funding for recreational trails and other non-motorized transportation options. The funds, which are distributed in Georgia by the Department of Transportation, require a 20 percent local match and are distributed every two years. The next application period has not yet been set.

B) Georgia Recreational Trails Program

These grants are funded by the federal Transportation Alternatives (formerly Transportation Enhancements) program and deal specifically with recreational trails. The grants are administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and are awarded annually. These grants could be used for the network of interpretive trails recommended in the plan.

C) Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax

The 13-county region of Georgia that includes Wilkes County approved this state-authorized tax in 2012. The tax is expected to generate several hundred million dollars during the next decade,

with 75 percent of the money allotted to a predetermined list of projects and the remaining 25 percent going toward discretionary projects. The discretionary funds will be distributed to the 13 counties for various transportation projects or activities. The potential exists for these funds to be used for roads or other transportation improvements to the site or as matching funds for other grants.

D) Georgia Conservation Tax Credit Program

This program provides incentives for the preservation of property through the use of conservation easements. While the portions of the battlefield on which interpretation will take place should be purchased outright, easements are recommended as a potential means for protecting the viewshed around the battlefield.

E) American Battlefield Protection Program

This federal program supports efforts that lead to the protection of battlefield sites. While most of the focus is on funding planning efforts, some of the funding is aimed at providing interpretation at battlefields. Grant funds are available for purposes such as interpretive programs, sign development and design, and brochures.

Grant funds for land acquisition under this program are currently limited to Civil War battlefield sites, but a bill that would expand eligibility to Revolutionary War and War of 1812 battlefields gathered significant support in Congress in 2012, although it did not pass before the session ended. A new bill was introduced again in 2013; should it or a similar bill become law, this could be a primary means of acquiring land at the site.

F) National Park Service – Land and Water Conservation Fund

This federal program provides grants, administered by the states, for the acquisition of and development of outdoor recreation facilities. This grant could not be used for the battlefield area itself, but could be used to acquire any recreational areas surrounding the battlefield.

G) National Trust for Historic Preservation - National Trust Preservation Funds

These grants are aimed at providing seed money for preservation. Most funding is for planning and education. The maximum grant is typically $5,000, with a one-to-one match required.

H) National Endowment for the Humanities

The America's Historical and Cultural Organizations program funds interpretation at historic sites, whether for signs, websites or exhibits. Grants are available for both planning and implementation.

Private foundations

A) Plum Creek Foundation

The Plum Creek Foundation provides grants of up to $10,000 in a number of categories. Those relevant to the Kettle Creek battlefield project include funding for historical centers, environmental education and conservation and civic organizations involved with parks and recreation facilities.

B) Watson-Brown Foundation

The Watson-Brown Foundation provides grants to organizations with a focus in Southern history. Eligible activities include museum and research support, educational programs and preservation. Maximum grants are roughly $10,000.

C) Georgia Humanities Council

The Georgia Humanities Council is a nonprofit group focused on supporting historic, cultural and other efforts. It provides grants of up to $2,000 for activities that include interpretive signage for historic sites, lectures, walking tours, living history programs and education aimed at children and families. A grant of this type could fund, for example, a program of guided tours at the battlefield.

D) Woodruff Foundation

Significant grants are available for art and cultural activities and conservation of natural resources. Grants typically go toward one-time capital projects rather than operating expenses, making this a potential fit for land acquisition.

Implementation partners

A) Wilkes County

Wilkes County has long been a fundamental resource for the Kettle Creek battlefield. The county has owned a 12.5-acre section of the battlefield since 1960 (another two acres were subsequently

given to the county) and has continued to maintain War Hill Road, the primary entrance to the battlefield. County officials have signaled their willingness to continue playing a role in the stewardship of the site and in potentially making more significant investments. At least in the short-term, the ownership of the site is likely to remain with the county, making it an important partner and resource on an ongoing basis.

B) Kettle Creek Battlefield Association

The Kettle Creek Battlefield Association formed in 2011 after a number of battlefield advocates came together to work for preservation of the field and improvements to the site. The group, which is incorporated as a nonprofit, has been active in raising the battlefield's profile across the state, and several members served on the advisory committee that helped create this plan. The association, in both form and function, serves as a "Friends of"-style group and likely will continue to play that role. Future activities could involve fund-raising and land management.

C) City of Washington

The county seat and largest city in Wilkes County, Washington also contains significant historic resources in its own right, and residents and officials understand and value historic preservation and heritage tourism. The city has often partnered with the county on various efforts in the past and is represented on the advisory committee that helped produce this document. Particularly if part of the interpretation of the site takes place in Washington, the city could serve as a resource in the future.

D) Land Trusts

Dozens of land trusts operate within the state of Georgia. Generally speaking, these organizations assist in preserving land by purchasing or accepting donated easements, which they then hold in perpetuity. Owners of the property retain some rights and also are able to claim tax benefits.

Some land trusts offer a broader suite of services, including assisting in purchasing land in fee simple. This assistance can range from technical assistance to literally purchasing the land, which then is sold to the public agency or nonprofit that will preserve it. An example of this type of trust includes the Trust for Public Land.

Locally, the CSRA Land Trust is one of a few dozen land trusts that are qualified by the state's Department of Natural Resources, which allows it to be involved in transactions that entitle the owner of a property that donates an easement to receive state tax credits.

E) Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission

The CSRA Regional Commission, which is responsible for producing this plan, is one of 12 regional organizations across Georgia. It represents the 13-county region that includes Augusta and the surrounding suburban and rural counties. The commission provides, among other things, planning and grant-writing assistance to member counties and municipalities. The commission represents a resource that could be tapped for future efforts at the battlefield that involve these services.

Models for preservation and improvement

This section examines potential models of preserving the Kettle Creek battlefield and better telling its story. It is based on case studies of two other Revolutionary War battlefields in the region, Camden and Ninety Six, both in South Carolina. The case studies can be found in Appendix B.

Preservation

The following are possibilities for preserving the battlefield and for protecting the view and surroundings from development that would harm the ability to enjoy the battlefield setting.

A) Fee simple acquisition

This refers to the outright purchase of land. This is the most costly of the possibilities, but it offers the most control as well. This is the method that should be used for land to be used for interpretive purposes or visitor services.

B) Option/right of first refusal

These are commonly used methods of buying time while resources can be found to purchase or otherwise preserve property. The purchaser of an option acquires the right to buy a piece of land at a designated price within a certain time, meaning it can not be sold to other buyers. At the end of that time, if the option to purchase is not exercised, it expires. The cost of an option is usually only a small fraction of the property's value and potentially can be applied to the purchase price.

A right of first refusal gives its owner the right to match an offer to purchase property before it is sold. The agreement would include a time frame during which the offer must be matched. This can at least give advocates the chance to amass funds for purchase before a potential opportunity is lost.

C) Conservation easements

This refers to the practice of a landowner giving or selling development rights, access or other rights while retaining ownership. This offers battlefield advocates the option of preserving the view of land surrounding the battlefield and protecting it from development while not purchasing the land outright. This is not recommended for areas to be used for interpretation or other core areas of the site, but can provide a means of protecting the viewshed surrounding the core. Easements can also be a temporary step on the way to outright purchase.

The process of obtaining easements would involve working with landowners to explain the process and the potential benefits, which can include tax benefits. The process typically involves an appraisal, title review and an assessment of the condition and resources on a property. Once established, easements typically involve annual visits by the easement holder. Area and state land trusts that specialize in conservation easements can be valuable partners in this process. Ultimately, in order for the property owner to receive tax benefits, the owner of the easement must be a government or a qualified land trust. The state of Georgia maintains a list of these qualified land trusts.

D) Land use regulation

This refers to using the zoning or other land use regulations as a means of shaping development. Zoning cannot be used to prevent all development on a property, as that would create a taking and would require the property owner be compensated. Zoning or other land use regulations are best used as a companion to the other techniques listed above as a means to prevent types of development incompatible with the quietude and rural setting necessary to imagine the battlefield as it was.

Ultimately, this plan envisions purchasing property upon which facilities or interpretation will take place. Easements can be used to ensure protection of views from the battlefield site, but the core battlefield interpretation should be owned outright. Zoning or other land use controls should be part of a longer-term discussion involving neighboring property owners.

Ownership/management

Another key issue is the ultimate ownership and management of the battlefield site. Again, a range of options exists and has been considered as part of this process, and it also is possible that Kettle Creek will undergo a transition from one to another as circumstances warrant.

A) Federal

The National Park Service owns and operates parks in every state. NPS status gives a historic site marketing visibility and steady funding. While it comes with restrictions, such as a ban on battle reenactments, federal ownership likely provides the largest boost to a site's visitorship and development in comparison to other options. Ninety Six, which is an NPS site, has seen visitorship steadily increase and averages over 50,000 annually.

Kettle Creek has unsuccessfully sought NPS status previously. This does not mean it is not possible in the future, however.

The National Park Service also offers an "Affiliated Areas" program. This program does not involve federal ownership or management, but does provide technical, financial and marketing resources to historic sites. The Augusta Canal National Heritage Area is an example of this type of site. While the program would not provide the same injection of support that full National Park Service status would offer, it would be a significant resource. The marketing benefits alone are significant. Affiliated sites benefit from inclusion on the National Park Service's website and from using the NPS logo on marketing materials. This provides an assurance to visitors of a certain quality of experience and resources at the site, something certain to result in increased numbers of visitors.

B) State

The state of Georgia owns and manages dozens of state parks, including a number of state historic sites. State park status can be seen as similar to National Park status, but with lesser levels of funding and, particularly, marketing visibility. State funding may be more susceptible to economic or political fluctuations. The state of Georgia owns the nearby A.H. Stephens Historic Park in Crawfordville, the site of the home of the vice-president of the Confederacy. The proximity – roughly 15 miles apart in adjacent counties – could act as a potential barrier to state funding for Kettle Creek.

C) Local government

The 14.5 acres of the site currently in public hands are owned by Wilkes County. The county is likely to continue to own the land in at least the short term. Resources are much more constrained than in comparison to state or federal ownership.

D) Nonprofit

A final possibility is that the site is owned or managed by a nonprofit group. A "friends of"-type group for the battlefield already exists and could potentially serve in this role. Resources would be more limited than in comparison to state or federal ownership.

Ultimately, a combination of local and nonprofit ownership and support is a reasonable approach to the site, at least in the short term, and recommendations to this end are made in Chapters 5 and 6.

Facilities/staffing

The final fundamental question to a historic site or battlefield is to what extent interpretive and guest facilities are added. Existing battlefield sites range from literally no facilities to elaborate developments including visitor centers with high-tech exhibits, extensive trail systems and restaurants and hotels. More typical is a modest visitor center that includes exhibits, a film about the history of the battle and guest facilities such as snacks and restrooms, along with a trail or trails that take visitors through the site and provide interpretation. Other sites are more basic, with trails but not necessarily a visitor center.

The following includes descriptions of various options for operation of the site. In all scenarios, interpretive trails and at least some form of orientation would be provided on-site. The key distinction involves the level of staffing, if any, at the site, and the corresponding presence or absence of a visitor center.

A) Staffed/visitor center

This includes a staffed visitor center with a larger range of visitor services and is what is found at the Ninety Six NPS site. Interpretive rangers provide tours, answer questions and generally provide a much higher level of interaction and interpretation than is found at unstaffed sites. This would be an ideal outcome but is dependent on acquiring resources.

B) Unstaffed/self-orientation

This refers to a site that, while it may provide interpretation, does not use on-site staff to do so. This currently represents the status of the Battle of Camden site. The site includes an orientation kiosk at the parking/trailhead area, and interpretive wayside signs along the trails. An appealing option under this model would be to have an off-site manned visitor center. This could be located at an institution with a similar mission, such as the Washington Historical Museum, Robert Toombs House, or the Mary Willis Library. In this scenario, artifacts and exhibits could be located at the off-site center, and staff or volunteers at the center would be trained in the history of the battle and be able to provide interpretation to visitors who would then visit the site itself. This is an ideal way to improve the visitor experience immediately while potentially pursuing resources for a staffed on-site center as a longer-term goal. Currently, the Washington Historical Museum maintains a display of artifacts from the battle. With additional funds, the museum could create an expanded exhibit with additional interpretive displays.

C) Circuit rider/hybrid

This represents a third possibility. The notion of a circuit rider involves a staff person who travels to different sites on a regular schedule. In practice, this would mean that the site is staffed on a certain day or days of the week. This could involve sharing a paid staffer with another site, such as A.H. Stephens Historic Park or the Washington Historical Museum, or it could involve volunteers who agree to staff the site or at least provide tours on certain days. Depending on the level of staffing – throughout an entire day or only at designated hours for tours – this scenario potentially implies a higher level of development at the site itself, with some kind of permanent structure to house the "circuit rider" and provide guest services.

In the short term, this plan recommends a combination of the unstaffed and circuit rider models. On most days, the facility will be unstaffed. However, a recommendation is for volunteers to staff the site on a regular, publicized schedule for guided tours. The following chapter explores these recommendations in more detail.

The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

CHAPTER 5:

PRESERVATION AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Overview

This chapter forms the core of the Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan. It discusses strategies for preserving the land where the battle took place and for better telling the story of that event. This chapter begins with a statement of final goals and objectives, arrived at after discussion with stakeholders during the development of the plan. The remainder of the chapter is divided into two main parts: preservation and improvement. The preservation section explores strategies for protecting and acquiring land on and around the battlefield and makes specific recommendations for achieving these goals. The improvement section assesses means of conveying the history of the battle and related events through the creation or improvement of facilities, the addition of interpretive trails or exhibits, and other actions that fulfill these goals. It also examines ways to improve the visitor experience in other respects. Finally, the following chapter, Chapter 6, lists specific actions aimed at implementing the goals and recommendations of this chapter.

Final goals and objectives

Chapter 1 included a preliminary assessment of goals for this document based on an initial understanding of the vision of the clients and stakeholders. This chapter contains the final version of these goals and objectives, arrived at after much more detailed discussions and research about the future of the site. The goals did not change radically from the initial goals, but some goals were added and others clarified and refined. The goals involve both short- and long-term considerations, but taken as a whole, they are aimed at creating the ideal long-term vision for the site. Lastly, while a certain amount of prioritization is implied in the list – clearly, the most important step is preserving the battlefield – all of them are considered critical to ensuring the long-term success of the site.

1 Preserve the battlefield

First and foremost, protect and preserve the ground on which the battle took place. Large parts of the battlefield – 174 acres out of the 189 acres identified by the archaeological study as the "core area" – are currently in private hands (Figure 5.1, following page). While most of the area is still undeveloped, there are no guarantees for the future. Ultimately, the core battlefield area should be preserved in perpetuity.

Figure 5.1

War Hill Road

New Salem
Church Road

Note: Core area consists of area defined by 2008 archaeological survey of Kettle Creek battlefield

War Hill/monuments

County property

Core area

Parcel lines

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Public Property Ownership

0   0.125   0.25   0.5
Miles

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2 Interpret the history of the battle

Current interpretation at the site is very limited. A successful battlefield park provides visitors with both the ability to walk the place where the battle took place as well as an understanding of what took place, why it happened as it did, and what it meant. Visitors should be able to walk the battlefield and understand the events as they unfolded across the landscape.

3 Protect the ability to imagine the scene as it was

Almost as important as being able to walk a battlefield is the ability for a visitor to project himself or herself back in time, to visualize the scene as it might have been centuries ago. In many locations, this is not possible due to development. In Kettle Creek, it is possible – and this feature should be preserved through the purchase or acquisition of lands and viewsheds surrounding the core area, ensuring that the battlefield is ringed by natural landscapes.

4 Enhance the visitor experience

In addition to improved interpretation, visitors should be provided with basic amenities such as restrooms, picnic tables, improved signage and other elements aimed at making visits more enjoyable.

5 Bring tourism and economic activity to Wilkes County and surrounding areas

While the primary goals are to protect and interpret the battlefield itself, these goals go hand-in-hand with an important secondary goal: to contribute economically to the area in the form of tourism and related activities. Wilkes County and surrounding areas are in need of new economic drivers – and tourism generated by the development of the battlefield park could help play a role in moving the county's economy forward.

6 Connect to other historic sites in the surrounding area

A key aspect of raising the profile of the site and attracting visitors to Kettle Creek is placing the battlefield and its history in a larger context. The battle is of clear importance not just to Wilkes County, but to Georgia and the Revolutionary War in the South. Telling the story of the broader campaign in Georgia and making connections to other sites makes that significance clear – and also creates more reasons for visitors to make a trip to Wilkes County and nearby historic sites. Realiz-

ing this goal involves creating interpretive and marketing materials that place Kettle Creek in a clear regional context and that refer to other nearby locations where visitors can learn more.

Battlefield Park concept plan

This section details the plan for achieving the most important goal of this process: protecting the battlefield for current and future generations. While the battlefield has been largely untouched by development and while development pressures are currently minimal in the surrounding area, there is no guarantee this will be the case in the future. Additionally, historic resources have been lost by timbering and other agricultural activities. Finally, acquiring land will allow, over time, portions of the battlefield to return to their state at the time of the battle, rather than continue as cultivated timberland. Preservation activities as envisioned in this plan include the protection of the battlefield area, the preservation of archaeological resources on the site and the preservation of the landscape of the area. Land acquisition can assume various forms, including fee simple purchase and the acquisition of easements as described in the previous chapter.

The plan involves creating a potential future Battlefield Park that includes two distinct sections: a historic park and a recreational park. Ultimately, the area identified for the park totals 1,374 acres (Figure 5.2). While investments made for the purpose of preserving the battlefield site can be leveraged into providing additional recreational opportunities, these two functions are not necessarily compatible. Recreational activities such as horseback riding can distract from or damage historic resources. The plan envisions focusing first on creating a historic park that includes the historic battlefield and some nearby areas. If additional land can be added in the future and if there is community support for creating recreational opportunities, areas surrounding the historic park section can become a recreational park. While the historic park boundaries represent areas essential to preserving the battlefield area itself, the broader Battlefield Park boundaries shown here are intended to illustrate potential long-term possibilities in a more conceptual manner.

Historic Park

This consists largely of the "core area" defined by the archaeological study and totals 265 acres, including the existing Wilkes County property. This section should be the short- and medium-term focus of preservation and improvement efforts. Ultimately, this section of the park should include

Figure 5.2

War Hill Road

War Hill/Monuments

Historic Park

Recreational Park

Kettle Creek Battlefield

Conceptual Battlefield Park Boundaries

0   0.25   0.5   1
Miles

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

additional interpretive facilities, visitor amenities, trails and improved access. Details on specific elements of the park are found later in this chapter.

Recreational Park

The focus of this plan is on preserving and improving the historic battlefield. However, as investments are made in the area, the opportunity exists to consider adding recreational facilities as well. This portion of the plan is designed to identify space where these activities, if feasible and desired in the future, could take place without interfering with the primary purpose of the park. This section of the proposed park includes an additional 1,109 acres that surround the core battlefield area. The types of recreation to be allowed in this section of the park would be a decision made with extensive community input. Possibilities include hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, and camping.

Land acquisition program

This section outlines the recommended means for preserving the battlefield area and providing space for interpretive activities. The maps and text that follow outline steps and priorities.

1) Purchase Priority 1a and Priority 1b

This is the fundamental element of the Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan. The core area, which includes land on both sides of Kettle Creek, should be purchased outright. These purchases should be prioritized according to the map shown in Figure. 5.3. Individual parcels are shown in Figure 5.4. The area north of the creek has been prioritized because it includes the site of most of the fighting and the troop movements leading up the battle. The area south of the creek is important to the story of the battle and the preservation of the site as well, and it includes the location of heavy fighting just before the battle ended. In reality, property acquisition will depend on whether tracts become available, as this plan does not contemplate the use of eminent domain to take land. Should a property included in the core area be available for purchase, then it should be acquired, regardless of which side of the creek it is on.

Additional note: Depending on the availability of resources, it may be necessary or desirable to acquire a smaller parcel or parcels of land initially. While all of the Priority 1 parcels are critical to preserving the battlefield, it is possible to identify smaller areas that merit strong consideration as

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Figure 5.3

War Hill Road

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Property acquisition and viewshed

Priority 1a
Priority 1b
Priority 2
Priority 3
Viewshed

War Hill/monuments

0   0.25   0.5   1
Miles

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Figure 5.4

Priority 1a
Priority 1b
Priority 2
Priority 3
War Hill/monuments

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Property acquisition phasing - parcels

0   0.25   0.5   1
Miles

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Property data for Figure 5.4.						
Map No.	Priority	Park section	Parcel No.	Acres	Total Value	Easement?
1	1A	Historic	030 003/B	184	$235,730	Fee simple
2	1A	Historic	030 003A	14	$24,518	Fee simple
3	1A	Historic	019 005	25	$31,722	Fee simple
4	1B	Historic	030 015	13	$18,221	Fee simple
5	1B	Historic	030 013	0.2	$289	Fee simple
6	1B	Historic	020 008	8	$10,667	Fee simple
7	1B	Historic	019 034	6	$11,020	Fee simple
8	2	Recreational	030 003/B	215	$275,446	Consider
9	2	Recreational	019 005	80	$101,511	Consider
10	2	Recreational	030 001	13	$36,752	Consider
11	2	Recreational	030 002	7	$11,315	Consider
12	2	Recreational	030 005	46	$64,638	Consider
13	2	Recreational	030 003A	27	$47,284	Consider
14	3	Recreational	031 003A	175	$306,474	Consider
15	3	Recreational	030 003/B	401	$513,738	No
16	3	Recreational	019 034	15	$27,551	Consider
17	3	Recreational	019 006	57	$110,797	Consider
18	3	Recreational	018 032 02	73	$93,547	No
Total Historic Park				**250**	**$332,168**	
Total Recreational Park				**1109**	**$1,589,053**	
Overall total				**1359**	**$1,921,221**	
Viewshed not included in Rec. Park				**418**	**$663,296**	
Total viewshed (overlaps with Recreational Park)				**970**	**$1,539,227**	

Figure 5.5. Priority property chart. Note: Information obtained in April 2013.

initial purchases. These parcels are illustrated on Figure 5.6 on the following page. Priority should be given to acquiring the small "notch" of War Hill missing from Wilkes County's property holdings (Priority A). This will require a survey to determine precise property lines. Acquiring several acres there – with the exact amount depending on the results of the survey – would allow for the construction of a trail around the hill while efforts proceed to acquire larger parcels.

Additional smaller-scale purchases are illustrated as well. A somewhat larger purchase (Priority B) would include part of the route taken by Clarke and his troops and would allow for the creation of a new parking area no longer visible from the battlefield. Finally, a purchase of land to the north and west of the hill (Priority C) would preserve views and protect a significant portion of the battlefield.

While preserving the entire battlefield is an important goal, there are benefits to purchasing a smaller piece of property initially. Such a purchase would create a sense of momentum and would

Figure 5.6

| | County property | ✳ War Hill |
| Priority A (7.5 acres) |
| Priority B (26 acres) |
| Priority C (57 acres) |
| Core area |

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Conceptual Smaller Purchase Scenarios

0   0.1   0.2   0.4
Miles

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demonstrate to potential funding groups that battlefield advocates are committed to the site.

2) Acquire easements on viewshed

The second element of the preservation plan is to protect the views from the battlefield. These are essential to another of the core goals, which is to preserve the ability of a visitor to mentally place himself or herself back in time, at the scene of the events. This portion of the plan is to be accomplished through the acquisition of easements. As this involves the protection of views, rather than of land to use for interpretive purposes, fee simple ownership of the land is unnecessary. The use of easements is cheaper and allows significant tax benefits to property owners. Additional information on easements and on land trusts that can assist in the process is found in Chapter 4.

The area for which easements should be pursued was defined through a simple process: beginning with Priority 2 properties, then adding an additional zone defined by starting from War Hill, then extending a "viewshed" of .75 miles. The results are illustrated in Figure 5.3. Again, as with the core area priorities, the acquisition of easements will in practice depend more on the interest of property owners. Given that, this process should be pursued in parallel with the fee simple acquisition of property. If an opportunity arises to purchase an easement, even if the adjacent section of the core area is not owned, then the easement should be considered.

3) Consider long-term acquisition of additional property for additional activities

This involves a much longer-term consideration than the first two steps and goes beyond the core mission of protecting and interpreting the battlefield. Given, however, that the battlefield park has the potential to serve a recreational purpose in addition to a historic preservation function, the acquisition of additional property can play an important part of fulfilling this role. As one of the goals of the project is to increase tourism, the provision of facilities such as a camping area or a recreational trail system offers the potential to attract more visitors and to entice them to remain longer.

Purely recreational activities do not necessarily fit well with the needs of protecting and interpreting historic sites. At Ninety Six National Historic Site, for example, a series of equestrian trails crosses the park, but due to potential conflicts, the trails are kept away from the core battlefield area (see Appendix A). For this reason, any purely recreational uses should not take place in the core area at Kettle Creek. Instead, they should be considered for land included in the viewshed area or beyond.

Figure 5.2 on page 69 illustrates possible areas for a recreational bicycle or equestrian trail system. If land in that area is to be used for recreational purposes, it should be purchased outright. Because the only overriding factor in the location of recreational facilities is that they be beyond the core area, the exact location of any such facilities will depend on the availability of land.

Interpretation and improvement

This section of the chapter discusses the means for improving the visitor experience at the site, the future ownership and management of the site, and marketing and related considerations. While acquiring more land at the site is a primary goal, the goals in this section can and should be pursued concurrently with the acquisition or protection of additional land.

Facilities: Short-term

1) Develop off-site visitor center

A major goal of a battlefield park is to provide visitors with a meaningful and engaging interpretation of the battle's events, context and importance. This is typically accomplished through a conation of a central orientation/exhibit area and interpretive signs or displays along trails that allow visitors to walk the battlefield itself. These orientation areas range from outdoor kiosks with maps and other information to full-blown visitors centers with full-time staffing.

In the case of Kettle Creek, funding for the construction and staffing of a visitors' center is not likely forthcoming in the short term. However, the opportunity is there to create an off-

Figures 5.7 and 5.8. Interpretive displays and exhibits such as those at Ninety Six can be added to the off-site visitors' center.

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site visitors' center that would fulfill this role in the interim with relatively modest investments. Such a center would:

- display maps and other orientation and informational information (Figure 5.7);
- display artifacts gathered from the battle site (Figure 5.8);
- be staffed by someone who would be able to provide basic interpretive information and answer general questions about the battle and the site;
- provide basic visitor facilities such as a restroom.

Given funding limitations, the staffing for this type of center would need to come from the existing staff of an institution with a similar mission. While other options may exist, two obvious possibilities to house this type of off-site center include the Washington Historical Museum and the Mary Willis Library, both in Washington. Both are shown in Figure 5.9. Both have an educational and historical mission and have staff experienced in working with visitors and answering questions. Both also might have space to house a modestly sized collection of artifacts and information.

The Washington Historical Museum currently offers a exhibit dedicated to Kettle Creek. However, an expanded exhibition with additional interpretive displays would provide visitors with a deeper understanding of the battle and related history and could include information targeted toward visitors of different ages.

Currently, some artifacts from the battle that were unearthed during the archaeological survey are stored at the Mary Willis Library. These items ultimately could be displayed at the library or the historical museum.

A possibility with respect to the creation of an off-site visitors' center is that it be staffed by volunteers. This would lessen the potential load on museum or library staff and tap into the knowledge and enthusiasm possessed by members of the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association and other local advocates. Similarly, volunteers could provide guided tours at the battlefield on a regular, publicized basis and create information for a self-guided tour of the battlefield.

The next step for advocates should be to initiate discussions with the museum or library about the possibility of creating an official off-site visitors' center. As a new on-site center is almost certainly years away, this will play an important role in enhancing the visitor experience for years to come.

Figure 5.9

Rayle

Washington

* Washington Historical Museum
* Mary Willis Library
* Kettle Creek

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Potential off-site visitors' center

0   0.5   1   2   3   4
Miles

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2) Develop on-site visitor amenities (restrooms, picnic area)

Another important and relatively inexpensive step in the short-term is to create on-site amenities for visitors to the battlefield. Currently, there are no restrooms at the site, making it less appealing for families or longer visits. With the development of trails and interpretive signs that allow visitors to spend more time at the site, the development of amenities to support those visits is crucial.

Figure 5.10. Restrooms have frequently been mentioned as a desired amenity.

These amenities should include some form of permanent restrooms, which should be located at or very near the existing parking area at the base of War Hill (Figure 5.10). The maintenance of these restrooms could be performed or funded by Wilkes County or the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association. The type of facility will depend on potential utility improvements to the site. Neither water nor sewer service is currently available.

The other main amenity that should be provided at the site is a picnic area. A few picnic tables are currently located at the top of War Hill. These should be removed and a picnic facility located near the parking area at the base of the hill.

3) Make security improvements to the site.

As additional investments are made to the site, the need for additional security measures rises. The principal need, following the acquisition of additional land, is for a new gate to block auto access at times other than regular park hours, such as beginning at dusk. This gate should be located on War Hill road at the eastern edge of the expanded park. While it would be possible for visitors to bypass the gate, it would have the effect of deterring most unwanted visits. Moreover, it would send the

signal that adverse behaviors at the site are taken seriously.

The stone foundations at the existing gate at the base of War Hill could be left in place, serving as a formal entranceway to the hill itself. The gate itself should be removed. Removable bollards should be added at the base of the trail, preventing vehicle access to the hill with the exception of maintenance or emergency vehicles. Additional future security steps could include a phone at the site, lighting in appropriate areas and additional patrolling activity by the Wilkes County Sheriff's Office.

Facilities: Long-term

1) Seek resources for on-site visitor center as a long-term strategy

While a short-term strategy can and should involve creating an off-site visitors' center and other on-site amenities, the longer-term goal should be to create an on-site visitors' center (example in Figure 5.11). This facility should include, at a minimum:

Figure 5.11. A modestly-sized visitors' center should be a part of long-term plans for the park.

- space for interpretive exhibits;
- a staffed information desk;
- guest facilities, including restrooms and vending machines;
- space for small gatherings (for tour groups or special programs).

The visitors' center should be located to the east of the current parking area, past the next ridgeline and out of sight from the battlefield. Upon its completion, the section of War Hill Road leading to the parking area should be relegated largely to pedestrian use and the primary parking area relocated to the visitors' center.

A primary ongoing goal should be to identify funding for the staffing and construction of a visitors' center, whether through federal or state support or some other means.

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Interpretation: Short-term

1) Develop orientation area

A key short-term goal should be the development of a central orientation area for visitors to the battlefield. This inexpensive facility will serve as the main on-site orientation for visitors until any permanent visitors' center can be funded and built. This orientation area should be located on the eastern side of the base of the hill, near the current parking area. This area should consist of an informational kiosk that includes maps of the site and of any trails, an overview of the history of the battle and related

Figure 5.12. Kiosks can assist visitors by providing maps and other information.

events, and brochures with maps and additional information (Figure 5.12). The kiosk should be roofed and weatherproof. The area should also include a trash receptacle.

2) Develop interpretive trails

Another essential short-term step is the creation of interpretive trails that allow visitors to learn more about the battle while walking the land where the events took place. These trails are a fundamental part of a battlefield park experience and should be developed as soon as possible. At various locations, the trails should include carefully designed and constructed interpretive signs, as shown in Figure 5.13.

The core interpretive trail involves an approximately .4-mile loop around the base of War Hill, as shown in Figure 5.14. This trail offers both a tour of critical events of the battle and striking views of War Hill itself. Interpretive

Figure 5.13. Wayside signs allow visitors to connect the story to precise locations on the battlefield.

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Figure 5.14

War Hill Road

Kettle Creek Battlefield

Battlefield Trail System

	Historic Park
	War Hill Loop Trail
	Battlefield Trail
	Summit Trail

0   0.1   0.2   0.4
Miles

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Figures 5.15 and 5.16. Two types of trails, one paved and accessible, the other informal.

signs along the trail will tell the story of what happened during the battle. This trail should be accessible to all visitors and therefore should be paved in asphalt or another material suitable for wheelchairs, as illustrated in Figure 5.15. Benches also should be placed along the trail.

While the War Hill loop trail is the first priority, it should not be the only interpretive trail. As additional property is acquired, additional interpretive trails should be developed. These trails, shown in Figure 5.16, could be less formal, without a paved surface or benches, although those features could be added at some point. These additional trails should, however, include wayside signs, as they travel though important elements of the battlefield and other historic sites.

The signs themselves should be primarily graphic, with text written in a brief and compelling way. Materials should be chosen for durability. Signs may also include a code, scannable by phones or other devices, that conveys more information – images, videos, recordings – that can help bring the history to life.

3) Develop exhibits at off-site center (to be transferred on-site when possible)

An important short-term or medium-term goal is to develop or improve exhibits that display artifacts or convey information that is difficult or not possible to convey outdoors. These exhibits could include ammunition or other artifacts collected during archaeological research, dioramas or other means of conveying information about the battle, or displays of typical clothing or other materials that would have been worn or used by soldiers at Kettle Creek. Ultimately, they also should include films, audio or interactive exhibits.

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Initially, such exhibits would be housed at an off-site visitors' center in Washington. When a permanent structure is constructed at the battlefield, they would be moved there. Initial exhibit development may be constrained by financial resources or display space at the off-site center. However, basic exhibits containing artifacts recovered from the battlefield or any other exhibits needed to fully tell the story of the battle and its broader context should be considered a priority.

4) Explore ways to interpret other features of the site

Battlefield sites offer the opportunity to engage visitors on multiple levels. Almost by definition, a visitor to a historic site – a heritage tourist – is interested in a learning experience. The primary motivation for the visit might be to learn more about the battle itself, but many visitors to historic sites likely are interested in also learning about history in a broader sense, or about other elements of the area, such as geological or biological features. Including these types of interpretive features also can make a visit more rewarding for groups of visitors who may have different interests.

Kettle Creek possesses rich material that can be used in the service of these goals. The area represented Georgia's inland frontier at the time of the battle. The history of everyday life in the Colonial/Revolutionary War/early Republic era is a story should be told at the site. Archaeological research, in addition to providing information about the battle, also located a number of historic home and farm sites at the battlefield. These could be locations for interpreting this broader history, either through wayside signs or replicas of historic structures. Other elements of history that should be included in interpretive efforts include Native American history and culture, farm techniques, religious life, the development of slave labor, transportation – Native American trails, plantation roads – and the gradual transformation of backcountry Georgia from a frontier to a settled and established area. The site also affords the opportunity to explore significant geological features, including War Hill itself, which represents a striking visual element in the landscape.

Interpretation: Short/medium-term

1) Develop new interpretive facilities

While adding interpretive signs will significantly increase visitors' understanding of the battle and Colonial and other history, creating additional facilities – a replica of a historic cabin, for instance –

can help visitors better visualize the history being presented. Giving visitors a hands-on look at life at the time of the Revolution can make their experience more memorable and meaningful. Other possibilities include farming structures and implements, items used in everyday life, or other items specific to the time period being portrayed. Such facilities also can be valuable tools for use during guided tours or by reenactors. Examples are shown in Figures 5.17 and 5.18. Care must be taken to ensure that any added facilities are carefully researched to accurately reflect the history being portrayed and that they are presented clearly as replicas rather than original features of the site.

Interpretation: Long-term

1) Develop additional interpretive exhibits (contingent upon on-site visitors' center)

Figures 5.17 and 5.18. Adding additional interpretive facilities to the site can make visits more rewarding and can encourage repeat visits.

As suggested in previous recommendations, the development of some interpretive exhibits and materials will likely not be feasible at a temporary off-site visitors' center. More elaborate and costly exhibits likely would need to be tailored to the future permanent home and would also be difficult to move. They therefore will depend on the construction of a permanent on-site visitors' center.

Once funding is found for an on-site visitors' center, planning should begin for additional interpretive exhibits that will tell the story of the battle. While some exhibits can simply be moved from the off-site center, new exhibits will be created. The ultimate goal should be a visitors' center with interpretive exhibits that tell an immersive story of the battle, one that engages the senses in a multi-

tude of ways and that is geared toward visitors of a range of ages and interests. Such exhibits should place the battle in a larger context and convey to visitors the events of the battle and the life of the era in a way that is concise, memorable and well-told.

Access: Short-term

1) End War Hill Road at the base of the hill

This is a simple and inexpensive but critical step toward preserving the site and providing an enhanced visitor experience. Currently, War Hill Road runs literally to the summit of War Hill, ending in an unpaved parking area near the monument. This has provided easy access to visitors but is undesirable in several other respects. First and foremost, the hill played a critical role in the battle. The hill is important in historic and symbolic terms and should not serve as a driveway for cars. The driveway and parking area also significantly detract from the experience of visiting the hill and attempting to picture the battlefield as it was at the time of the battle. Finally, the road and parking area contribute to erosion and create higher maintenance demands at the site.

Figure 5.19. The current road to the summit of War Hill should be converted into a pedestrian path that still allows access for maintenance vehicles.

The solution is to abandon the .08-mile stretch of road that runs from the grassy parking area at the base of War Hill up to the top of the hill. The route up the hill, shown in figure 5.19, should be maintained as a pedestrian and maintenance path instead. The parking area at the top of the hill should be allowed to return to a vegetated state. Removable bollards should be located at the base of the hill at the existing gates to block regular vehicular traffic but to allow maintenance access as needed.

Access: Medium/long-term

1) Improve War Hill Road (or New Salem Church Road)

The current means of access to the site is War Hill Road, which is owned and maintained by Wilkes County. This will continue to be the main access in at least the short-to-medium term. Ultimately, this road should be paved from Court Ground Road to the site of the future visitors' center and parking area. The timing of the paving should depend on the number of visitors. National Park Service standards, shown in Figure 5.20, specify gravel as a reasonable surface option until average daily traffic reaches 400. Current ADT at the site is not measured but falls well below that threshold. For the purposes of paving, a traffic counter should be installed on War Hill Road. In conjunction with subjective factors, the count should be used as a means to determine when and if

Average daily traffic	Lanes	Lane width (feet)	Shoulder width (feet)	Surface
<50	2	8	1	Dirt/gravel/paved
50-200	2	9	1	Dirt/gravel/paved
200-400	2	9	2	Gravel/paved
400-1000	2	10	3	Paved
1000-4000	2	11	4	Paved
4000-8000	2	11	5	Paved
>8000	4	12	8	Paved

Figure 5.20. National Park Service recommended standards for park roads.

the road should be paved. Additionally, the current county right-of-way varies in width. In a few places, additional right-of-way may need to be acquired in order to allow for two travel lanes. An short-term strategy is to create pullout spaces in those sections. An initial step should be to survey both War Hill Road and New Salem Church Road to determine exact right-of-way dimensions.

Some stakeholders have expressed interest in creating a new means of access to the site from the south, on New Salem Church Road (Figure 5.21). This road currently does not reach county property, making property acquisition south of the creek necessary for this to be a feasible option. This potential access route does have some advantages. It is a more direct access to the site from State Road 44 (1.5 miles versus 3.6 miles). It also is more direct for visitors coming from Interstate 20.

There are disadvantages, however. The time and expense involved in making New Salem Church

Figure 5.21

War Hill Road

New Salem Church Road

— Historic Park

— War Hill Road access/parking

— Potential future access/parking

✹ War Hill/monuments

✳ Future parking/visitors' center

Kettle Creek Battlefield

Potential Alternative Access

0   0.25   0.5   1 Miles

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Figure 5.22

War Hill Road

* War Hill/Monuments
* Current Parking/Future Accessible Parking
* Future Parking and Visitors' Center
▭ Historic Park

Kettle Creek Battlefield
Parking/Future Visitors' Center

0   0.125   0.25   0.5
                                    Miles

Preserving Our Past: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan

Road the primary access could prove to be impediments and raise the question of whether those resources would better be spent elsewhere. The public right-of-way along New Salem Church is narrower than along most of War Hill Road. The New Salem Church Road route is not significantly shorter than War Hill Road for visitors from Washington. Finally, the creation of a new access road could potentially create unhappiness with the project among neighboring property owners.

2) Create parking area/future Visitors' Center site

While this plan envisions short-term improvements that enhance the site but do not involve the significant capital expense of a visitors' center, such a facility should be a long-term goal for the site. The details of a visitors' center are elaborated upon in the following section, which deals with facilities. However, decisions about access should be made with the site for a future parking area and visitors' center in mind. This facility should be located farther back from War Hill than the current parking area, which encroaches upon part of the battlefield. The location of the site is shown in Figure 5.22. Trails would connect the area to War Hill and other portions of the battlefield. This would allow visitors the option of proceeding directly to War Hill or to follow the progress of the battle from the north to the south.

A small portion of the current parking area at the base of the hill should be retained for use by visitors with disabilities. For the most part, however, visitors would use the new lot. Ultimately, if other accommodations can be made for those with disabilities – such as the use of golf carts kept at a visitors' center, as is the case at some other sites – then all parking at the hill should be eliminated. If New Salem Church Road becomes the primary site access, the parking area and visitors' center site should be located south of the creek, away from the core battlefield area, as shown in Figure 5.21.

3) Bridge the creek

Another likely medium- or longer-term step should be the creation of a pedestrian bridge across Kettle Creek. This will allow visitors access to the final stages of the battle, which took place south of the creek, as well as provide a focal point and memorable vista in and of itself. The timing of the construction of the bridge will depend on land acquisition. No bridge will be necessary unless property on the south side of the creek is obtained. Should New Salem Creek Road become the primary access route to the battlefield, the bridge then would become the primary means for visitors to ac-

cess War Hill. In that case, the bridge would remain a pedestrian-only bridge, connecting the main parking area and potential visitors' center on the south side of the creek to the main body of the battlefields on the north side.

This bridge should not be designed for auto access. Vehicular traffic over the creek – as well as the road and bridge itself if designed to auto standards – would create a visual and noise intrusion into the site. A bridge over the creek should be wide enough for maintenance vehicles such as golf carts or all-terrain vehicles, however. While an automotive bridge is not recommended, if such a facility is ever added, it should cross Kettle Creek well to the east of War Hill, far enough away to minimize the visual and auditory impact on the battlefield.

Telling/connecting to a broader story: Short-term

1) Position the site as the gateway to the Revolutionary War in the Georgia Backcountry

The history of the Battle of Kettle Creek is important enough in itself to justify substantial investments in preserving and improving the site. Yet the potential exists to tell an even broader story at the site: the story of the Revolutionary War in the Georgia Backcountry. While numerous engagements and activities took place in parts of Georgia far inland from Savannah, there currently is no site or center that tells the story of these events. In fact, the only real Revolutionary War museum in Georgia is located in Savannah. While events in coastal Georgia were significant, the war in the upstate may well have had more relevance to the rest of the war and the ultimate outcome. This creates the opportunity for Kettle Creek to position itself as the gateway to this history.

This is both a short- and long-term goal. The short term goal involves telling this broader story at the site and at any off-site visitors' center. This involves identifying other sites critical to the story of the war in the Georgia backcountry and developing maps and other materials that direct Kettle Creek visitors to these sites and explain the shared history. Examples are shown in Figures 5.23 and 5.24. Exhibits developed for Kettle Creek should also detail this broader story of the war in the backcountry. This goal could be aided by a 2013 effort to identify the exact location of Carr's Fort, another important Revolutionary War site in Wilkes County.

Longer-term steps involve positioning the site as the nexus of the war in the back-country in the search for state or federal funding. Telling this broader story at the site will increase the chances of funding and will provide more context and information to battlefield visitors. Ultimately, an on-site visitors' center will include exhibits and other materials that well tell this broader story.

Marketing/partnerships: Short-term

1) Connect the site to other visitor attractions in the area

As noted previously in this plan, "heritage tourism" can play an important role in attracting visitors who tend to be wealthier and spend more money on trips than the average tourist. Certainly Kettle Creek is

Figures 5.23 and 5.24. Replica of Elijah Clarke's cabin (top) and the Rock House (bottom).

potentially well positioned to attract these and other visitors, but part of making the site more attractive is to enable visitors to make a day or weekend-long stay of their trip. This would mean more visitors to Kettle Creek and a greater economic impact for Wilkes County, as longer stays obviously translate into hotel and other hospitality industry-related revenues.

Making these longer stays more likely, however, requires a concerted strategy. Even with a network of trails, most guests likely will stay a few hours at most at the battlefield. Enticing them to stay in the area longer means pointing them to other attractions that would appeal to battlefield visitors. As discussed in Chapter 3, Wilkes County and its immediate surroundings have a number of historic sites that would serve to allow visitors to make a daylong or weekend-long visit. These include the

Washington Historical Museum, Robert Toombs House Historic Site, A.H. Stephens Historic Park, historic neighborhoods and houses in Washington, and the square Washington, which also has dining and lodging options appealing to the heritage tourist. More broadly, the site could position itself as a part of a proposed "13th Colony Heritage Tourism Trail," an effort to link together Colonial and Revolutionary-era sites in Georgia. Efforts to create a Georgia Scenic Byway that would link Kettle Creek, Washington, Crawfordville and other destinations are in progress as well.

Capitalizing on this strategy means connecting with these sites, both in terms of telling a story that connects these elements and in marketing them as parts of a broader historic area. This can be done with brochures and other materials at the sites, in online marketing and in how, when possible and relevant, interpretation and other information at each site places it in a broader historic context.

2) Use a web site to tell the story and attract visitors

Providing interpretation of a site takes place both physically at the site and online. The rich history of Kettle Creek lends itself well to a website that tells the story of the battle and points online visitors to the physical battlefield itself. Such a site would tell a detailed and highly visual story of the battle, would answer questions about getting to the site and amenities in the area, and would place the site in the broader context of area historic sites mentioned above. It also would allow potential visitors to take a virtual tour of the battlefield.

The site could be created and maintained by the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association, which has members with the skills and interest needed to maintain a lively and informative site. The site should be developed in partnership with other stakeholders, including Wilkes County, the Washington-Wilkes Chamber of Commerce, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and others.

Fundraising, visibility and outreach: Short-term

Kettle Creek is fortunate to have an existing group of advocates who have been successful in raising money for the protection of the site in a relatively short time. The opportunity exists to scale up these efforts significantly. Local DAR and SAR groups are well-connected to their counterpart state and national organizations, and members of those organizations share the same goals of protecting battlefields and preserving history. A specific effort targeted toward these and similar groups

should begin immediately. The fundraising approach should note that the battlefield currently offers a unique experience due to the undeveloped nature of the area. It should also point out that the opportunity exists now to protect the site in perpetuity – but that recent developments pose a threat to that goal. On a longer-term basis, these and similar groups should be provided with brochures and other information and promotional materials, as members are likely to be interested in visiting the battlefield and supporting it. Organizing visits to the site for potential supporters can help them clearly understand and appreciate the site's history and potential.

Other efforts can be made to engage the community and potential advocates. The creation of an annual lecture series, guided tours or similar events are additional means of building support for the battlefield. A "traveling trunk" – a collection of artifacts and items that help tell the story of the battle – can be used in educational programs at schools and events across the region and state. Such a program provides educational benefits while also raising the profile of the battle and site.

Beyond these efforts, advocates can do much to raise the visibility, and therefore fundraising potential, of the battlefield by engaging the media. The effort to highlight an overlooked portion of Georgia's Revolutionary War past – and the potential threats to that effort – create a storyline likely to be of interest to media outlets and media consumers.

Recreation: Long-term

1) Acquire additional space for recreation as a long-term strategy

Purely recreational facilities can be an imperfect fit with the preservation and interpretation of a historic site, particularly a battlefield site. This plan does not envision any recreational activities (the interpretive trails are not considered recreational trails, although of course visitors will use them as both opportunities for learning and recreation) in the core area of the battlefield. For this reason, recreation is considered a longer-term goal for the site.

Should sufficient land be acquired in the future, however, purely recreational facilities such as bike or equestrian trails or camping become possibilities. Such facilities could serve as additional attractors to the site and as a means to leverage the existing public investments at the site in a way to better serve county residents and others. This depends on acquiring enough land so that the recreational facilities would share only a central parking/orientation area with interpretive or historic sections

of the site. The recreational facilities themselves would be separate from the core of the battlefield and spaced far enough away so that any spillover effects – noise, visual distraction and so on – are

Site	Acreage	Bicycle trails	Horse trails	Camping
Ninety Six	1,022	Yes	Yes	No
Camden	477	Yes	No	No
Kings Mountain	3,945	No	Yes	Yes
Cowpens	842	No	Yes	No
A.H. Stephens	1,177	No	Yes	Yes

Figure 5.25. Recreational facilities at historic sites.

eliminated. The exact location of any recreational facilities will be determined by the availability of land, but a possible configuration is shown in Figure 5.2. The land where any recreational facilities are created would need to be owned outright. One possibility is that land on which easements are acquired for viewshed protection purposes is ultimately purchased outright. Examples of recreational facilities and policies at other battlefield and historic sites are shown in Figure 5.25.

The plan deliberately avoids precision about the exact nature and location of different types of recreational offerings. Any future efforts to include recreational space and offerings into the Kettle Creek site require additional planning to address questions of need, appropriateness and siting.

Wayfinding: Short-term

1) Wayfinding from Washington, nearby areas

An important companion step to improving a visitor attraction is ensuring that visitors can easily locate it. While the widespread use of GPS technology has made navigation easier, the use of physical signage remains important. Current signage directs visitors to the site from State Road 44 and State Road 22. Additional signage should be placed along U.S. 78 at Richardson Road, and, in Washington, at the intersection of Robert Toombs Avenue and State Road 44. The creation of a Georgia Scenic Byway could play a role in providing additional wayfinding signs and resources.

Wayfinding: Medium/long-term

1) Wayfinding from Interstate 20/rest of Georgia

While adding signage to Interstate 20 would attract additional visitors to the battlefield, doing so is

not recommended in the short term. The site currently does not offer enough in terms of interpretation or visitor amenities to justify attracting casual visitors who may not have a specific interest in the site or an idea of what facilities are present. Disappointment is a possible result.

However, as the park expands and as the interpretive facilities allow for a much more immersive and interactive experience, then working to attract these visitors is a worthwhile goal. Once additional land is purchased and trails and other facilities are in place that would allow for longer visits, then signage along the interstate is recommended.

Ownership/management

Decisions about ownership and management of the site are another critical element in shaping the future of the battlefield. As with decisions about the acquisition of property, however, there should be some flexibility in this regard. While this document recommends a strategy of keeping the battlefield under Wilkes County ownership for at least the near term and perhaps longer, ongoing efforts should be made to pursue state or federal ownership. This strategy should be pursued, however, with the understanding that Wilkes County may retain ownership well into the long term.

Ownership/management: Short-term

1) Continue Wilkes County ownership

This document recommends no immediate changes in ownership. Wilkes County is the entity in the best position to own and manage the site for the short and medium term. The likelihood of achieving state or federal park status in the near term, given current budget constraints, is not high. Decisions and acquiring land and developing the property should be made with the assumption that Wilkes County will continue to own the battleground site. Given that it is the steward of an important historic and tourism asset, Wilkes County should strive to maintain and continually upgrade the site using available resources and look for opportunities to identify and pursue additional resources.

2) Partner more closely with the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association

The Kettle Creek Battlefield Association has, during its short time in existence, shown a vibrancy

and level of activity that recommends it as a valuable partner for the site. The association, which is incorporated as a nonprofit, can serve as an ally to Wilkes County in the management and improvement of the site. The association can, among other duties, help to maintain, promote, staff and raise funds for the site. Given the funding constraints facing Wilkes County in the foreseeable future, KCBA can play an important role in the ongoing evolution of the site.

3) Pursue federal "Affiliated Area" status

A relatively recent development in the National Park Service is the creation of so-called "Affiliated Areas." This status refers to a federal role that is well short of National Park status but that can provide valuable financial and, particularly, branding and marketing support for a historic site. In brief, the Affiliated status involves the provision of financial or other assistance, but not outright ownership or permanent staffing.

Marketing is a key benefit of the arrangement. Affiliated Areas are included in NPS promotional materials and on website and may use the NPS logo and other materials in promoting themselves. This arrangement could provide a boost to the development of the site in the short term while not precluding the possibility of other arrangements in the long term.

Ownership/management: Long-term

1) Pursue/consider federal and state management

While Wilkes County has been a good steward of the property and will continue to play an important role in the future of the site, it is clear that the state of Georgia or the federal government would be able to commit far more resources to the site. State or federal ownership would mean full-time staffing at the site and almost certainly would provide a higher level of maintenance and other support services.

Advocates of the site should therefore take a dual track – continue to work with Wilkes County in making improvements to the site and its management, while also working with elected officials on the state and federal level to pursue state or national park status.

The case for state park status is overwhelming. The battle might have been the most important Revolutionary War engagement in Georgia and is certainly Georgia's most important Revolutionary

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War site outside of Savannah. Its importance to the state of Georgia and the nation is clear and easily merits ongoing state investment and support. State legislators have been engaged in the planning process and have demonstrated support for the park. While the current budgetary climate makes state ownership unlikely in the short term, the possibility of state park status is very real in the medium to long term.

The case for National Park status is also quite strong. Although efforts to achieve this status several decades ago were unsuccessful, that does not mean future efforts should be abandoned. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, the battle clearly holds importance well beyond the local or even state level. It is a significant part of telling the story of the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War in that it is the first demonstration of the flaws in the British strategy for winning the war in the South. It could be argued that the remainder of the war was simply Kettle Creek writ large.

National Park status would bring a much higher level of prominence to the site and would greatly increase visitorship. It would provide for full-time staffing and a significant level of investment in the site. In comparison to state ownership, federal ownership likely would provide more insulation against short-term budgetary swings and accompanying cutbacks. The only significant potential disadvantage is the ban on military reenactments on national park land. This does not prevent non-military reenacting, however. In any case, past reenactments have taken place in the city of Washington, rather than at the site.

Battlefield advocates should work with state and federal elected officials in assessing the possibility of achieving National Park status for the site. While this is unlikely to occur in the short or medium term, it is a possibility in the long term. Given funding constraints, however, pursuing state or national park status should not be considered a top priority in the short term. Again, however, flexibility is key. Should the right opportunity present itself, it should be pursued.

Land use: Short-term.

While land use regulations are not an appropriate means to preserve a battlefield itself, they can play a complementary role by ensuring that development surrounding the area is appropriate to the location. The current Washington-Wilkes County comprehensive plan identifies Kettle Creek as an "area requiring special attention" and recommends that Wilkes County "review current develop-

ment procedures to ensure that natural and cultural resources as well as identified areas requiring special attention are protected from the unintended consequences of development." The comprehensive plan recommends increasing the current minimum lot sizes in the area. It also found that agricultural and very low density residential uses are appropriate for the area.

This plan's recommendation is for Wilkes County to examine its current land development regulations with respect to whether any changes should be made in the Kettle Creek area. Should changes be made, the recommendations found in the county's comprehensive plan would be appropriate.

Other steps: Medium/long-term

1) Relocate gravestones not associated with the battlefield

One relatively recent addition to the site is the small collection of graves and gravestones located atop War Hill. Many of the markers commemorate soldiers who did not participate in the Battle of Kettle Creek. While sacred and important in their own right, these markers, shown in figure 5.26, are misleading for visitors to the site,

Figure 5.26. The memorial area includes markers for a number of soldiers who did not fight at Kettle Creek. Some have suggested relocating the area off the hill.

especially when found at such a critical location. Consideration should be given to moving the markers to another location nearby, either on an expanded battlefield site or at a nearby burial ground.

Summary

Short-term

The overall goal of these combined recommendations is to in the short term create a larger and improved Kettle Creek battlefield that offers a significantly upgraded visitor experience. Upon arriving – possibly after first stopping at a Kettle Creek visitors' center in Washington – visitors will park at a new parking area that is set back slightly from the hill and that offers views of the hill and sur-

Figure 5.27

Restrooms

Picnic area

War Hill loop trail

Information kiosk

Parking area

Monuments

War Hill Road

Paved trail to top of hill

Trail to top of War Hill/monument area

War Hill loop trail

Trail to future parking area

Kettle Creek Battlefield

Short-Term Site Plan

Figure 5.28

War Hill Road

Historic Park

Recreational Park

N
W E
S

☀ War Hill/Monuments

✳ Trailhead/information

✳ Parking lot/future visitors
center

🟧 Historic Park

🟩 Recreational Park

Kettle Creek Battlefield

Long-Term Site Plan

0   0.25   0.5   1
Miles

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rounding areas. Upon arriving at the base of the hill, they will be greeted by an orientation area, with a kiosk, restrooms and picnic tables (Figure 5.27). The kiosk will include displays that provide them with easy-to-understand maps and descriptions of the battle and of the broader story of the Revolutionary War in the Georgia backcountry. Visitors will be able to walk either of two trails, one made accessible for visitors of all abilities. Along the trails, they will be able to enjoy views of the hill and surrounding lands and be able to stop and read interpretive signs that inform them about the flow of the battle and what took place at their current location. Ultimately, the visitor to the Kettle Creek battlefield will leave with a richer understanding of its history and significance.

In short, the near-term steps include:

- preserving the battlefield;
- adding interpretive facilities, including trails and an orientation area;
- adding visitor amenities, including restrooms and a picnic area;
- security improvements;
- creating an off-site visitors' center;
- creating a new parking area farther back from the hill;
- stepping up marketing and fundraising efforts.

Long-term

On a long-term basis, the site potentially offers an expanded range of activities for visitors, as well as a staffed visitors' center. Rangers would be available to give tours and answer questions. A pedestrian bridge across Kettle Creek would allow visitors to walk the site of the battle's conclusion and to better experience the creek itself. The current access road would be improved and potentially a new access from the south would be added (Figure 5.28). To summarize, these steps include:

- expanding the park footprint;
- potentially adding uses at the site while protecting the experience of visiting the battlefield;
- addressing access needs as they arise;
- bridging the creek;
- adding a permanent visitors' center;
- adding permanent staff to the site.

CHAPTER 6:

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Overview

While developing a clear and compelling vision is necessary to obtaining a desired outcome, it is not sufficient in itself. A concrete, step-by-step implementation program is also crucial in order to ensure that plans become reality. Such a program identifies necessary actions, specifies the party responsible for undertaking those actions, attaches a cost estimate to the actions and recommends potential funding sources for each action. This chapter describes that program.

The chapter focuses on clear, measurable short-term actions, defined as those to take place within the next five years. Medium/long term actions are those that, for various reasons, are unnecessary, undesirable or unlikely for the short term. Those actions are described in detail in Chapter 5 but are not included as part of this implementation program. Generally, they include actions that should take place in a time frame of between five to 20 years. Beyond that time frame, recommending specific actions becomes less fruitful, as changing circumstances necessarily lead to changing needs and actions. At that time, a new master plan should be performed to assess conditions and resources and to base a new set of recommendations on the findings.

The focus of the Implementation Program on short-term actions reflects the fact that recommended actions contained in Chapter 5 differ in many respects – importance, urgency, impact, cost. Generally speaking, the short-term steps are those critical to achieving the park's most significant goals - protecting the battlefield and improving the ability of visitors to understand and appreciate the history contained within its borders. The steps in the short-term section also include those with maximum impact: One significant reason Kettle Creek offers such potential as a historic site is that great opportunity exists for significant, rapid improvement to the visitor experience. Many steps that can improve that experience carry a very modest price and can be achieved in the very near future.

The longer-term actions are generally different in kind than the short-term steps. Some are dependent on previous actions occurring. Others involve more difficult funding situations. Still others involve a reassessment of needs after the initial set of improvements.

While the Implementation Program is focused on the short term, it is not intended as an unchangeable, set-in-stone list. For various reasons, some actions might move up or down in terms of priority. Should progress on the short-term actions occur much more quickly than envisioned, then the

some long-term steps could be considered sooner. Or it may be that fortunate opportunities arise in which a longer-term action is ripe for action – in that case, departing from this list represents the best course. Still, this list represents a considered effort to craft an agenda that maximizes resources and added value to the site, and changes should be made only following due consideration.

Finally, while each action is assigned to a responsible party, these are suggestions, not absolutes. Opportunities may arise for the involvement of actors or partnerships not envisioned in this document, or changing levels of resources may lead to shifts in responsibilities. The same is true for cost estimates and funding sources, which are provided here as a guide. Costs may change depending on a range of factors, and identifying funding sources should be seen as an ongoing process.

Implementation program

This section is divided into several broad topics. The overarching goal in the short term is to preserve the core battlefield area and to take a number of steps to improve the visitor experience, both in terms of interpretation and amenities. Other than the cost of acquiring land, most of the actions in this section carry relatively modest price tags. The focus is less on large bricks-and-mortar projects – that are important for the long term – and more on steps such as trails, signage and creating an "off-site" visitors center for the battlefield. Cost estimates are provided where possible. Additional information about the cost estimates can be found in Appendix A.

Land Acquisition

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	PAGE REFERENCE
1) Protect the core battlefield site and provide the ability for additional interpretation.	1.1. Survey area around base of War Hill.	Wilkes County	TBD	Wilkes County	70, 73-74
	1.2 Meet to determine initial purchase area.	Wilkes County/ KCBA	Time	N/A	70, 73-74
	1.3. Acquire smaller section of Plum Creek land surrounding War Hill (Priority A/B/C).	Wilkes County/ KCBA	TBD	Wilkes County/KCBA	70, 73-74
	1.4. Option/acquire core area land (Parcel 1) from Plum Creek.	Wilkes County/ KCBA	TBD	Grant/county/private fundraising	70-73
	1.5. Begin discussions about acquiring additional Priority 1 parcels.	Wilkes County/ KCBA	Staff time	N/A	70-73
	1.6 Continue communication with Priority 2 and 3 property owners	KCBA	Time	N/A	70-75
2) Protect the viewshed from the battlefield.	2.1 Acquire conservation easements in designated area.	KCBA	TBD	Grant/private fundraising/donated easements	70-75

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Interpretation

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	PAGE REFERENCE
1) Improve the ability of visitors to understand the history of the battle and other site features.	1.1. Create orientation kiosk.	KCBA	$1,000 - $3,000	Grant/private fundraising	81
	1.2. Create War Hill Trail.	Wilkes County/ KCBA	$50,000 – $100,000	County/grant/private fundraising	81-83
	1.3 Create Battlefield Trail.	Wilkes County	Labor	County	81-83
	1.4 Create interpretive signs for trails.	KCBA	$10,000	Grant/private fundraising	81-83
	1.5 Establish volunteer guided tour program on set dates.	KCBA	Time	N/A	77
	1.6 Train volunteers to give guided tours.	KCBA	Time	N/A	77
	1.7 Create self-guided tour materials.	KCBA	Time	Grant	77
2) Create off-site visitors' center	2.1 Discuss possibility with Historical Museum and Mary Willis Library.	KCBA	Time	N/A	76-77
	2.2 Enter into agreement with institution to create off-site center.	KCBA	Time	KCBA	76-77
	2.3 Create exhibits for off-site center.	KCBA	$10,000	Grant/private fundraising	76-77
	2.4 Train staff at off-site center.	KCBA	Time	N/A	76-77

Facilities

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	PAGE REFERENCE
1) Improve the visitor experience by providing new amenities.	1.1. Create restroom facility near base of War Hill.	Wilkes County/ KCBA	$20,000-$40,000	County/grant/private fundraising	79
	1.2. Create picnic area near base of War Hill.	Wilkes County/ KCBA	$2,000-$4,000	County/private fundraising	79
	1.3 Move gate to edge of expanded boundary	Wilkes County/ KCBA	$1,000, labor	County	79-80

Access

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	PAGE REFERENCE
1) Improve accessibility to the battlefield and address other related issues.	1.1. End car access to War Hill.	County	TBD	N/A	86
	1.2. Create new parking area east of core area.	Wilkes County/ KCBA	TBD	County/grant/private fundraising	88-90
	1.3. Survey right-of-way on War Hill and New Salem Church roads.	Wilkes County	TBD	County	87-90
	1.4. Install a traffic counter on War Hill Road.	Wilkes County	$1,000-$2,000	County	89

Chapter 6: Implementation Program

Marketing/fundraising

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	PAGE REFERENCE
1) Make the site more prominent for potential visitors and supporters.	1.1. Create website.	KCBA	TBD	Grant/private fundraising	93
	1.2. Connect the site to other attractions in area.	KCBA, Chamber of Commerce	TBD	County/grant/private fundraising	91-93
	1.3 Create and market guided tours of site.	KCBA	Time	N/A	77,85,94
	1.4 Install additional wayfinding signs.	County/KCBA	TBD	County/private fundaising	95
	1.5 Create lecture series or similar event.	KCBA	TBD	Grant	94
	1.6 Organize site visits for potential advocates	KCBA	TBD	Private fundraising	93-94
2) Raise funds for preservation/improvement.	1.5 Initiate fundraising effort targeted at similar advocacy groups.	KCBA	Time	N/A	93-94

Management/ownership

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	PAGE REFERENCE
1) Continue to assess management and ownership options.	1.1. Create closer partnership with KCBA.	Wilkes County	Time	N/A	96-97
	1.2. Pursue federal Affiliated Area status.	KCBA	Time	N/A	97
	1.3 Make inquiries into possibility and desirability of state/federal ownership.	County/KCBA	Time	N/A	97-98

Operations/maintenance

OBJECTIVES	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	PAGE REFERENCE
1) Ensure that the site is well-maintained.	1.1. Continue to perform regular maintenance at the site.	County	Time	County	96
	1.2. Increase the frequency of patrols to the site.	Wilkes County Sheriff's Office.	Time	County	80

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APPENDIX A
CASE STUDIES

This section seeks to explore examples of other battlefield sites that have been the target of preservation and improvement efforts. By examining similar sites, Kettle Creek advocates can see how challenges were identified and overcome during the planning and implementation process. This chapter focuses on the Revolutionary War battlefields at Ninety Six and Camden, both in South Carolina. The two sites are similar to Kettle Creek in many ways – both also are located in rural areas, developed into parks relatively recently and commemorate battles of roughly similar scale. Both sites offer lessons for the future of Kettle Creek.

Figure A.1. Visitors Center at Ninety Six National Historic Site.

Figure A.2. Approach to the Star Fort at Ninety Six.

Ninety Six National Historic Site

Owner: National Park Service

History: Revolutionary War battles in 1775, 1781

Visitors in 2011: 70,099

Size: 1,022 acres

Staff: Two interpretive rangers, four total staff

Site history: National Register in 1969, National Historic Landmark in 1973, National Historic Site in 1976

(Source: National Park Service)

The site at Ninety Six is quite similar to Kettle Creek in many ways. Located roughly 60 miles

northwest of Kettle Creek in rural South Carolina, Ninety Six was also a key part of the Southern theater of the Revolutionary War. Two battles took place there, including a siege of a Loyalist-held fort in 1781.

Site history

The rural nature of the site's surroundings meant it went largely undisturbed by development in the centuries since the war, but Ninety Six did not see significant land preservation activity until after many other Revolutionary War sites became parks. After decades of failed efforts to preserve the site, momentum finally began to gather in the 1960s. A local committee formed to push for recognition and improvements, and the site was listed on the National Register of historic places in 1969. Just a few years later, and with the strong backing of the state's Congressional delegation, the U.S. Congress passed a bill creating a national park at Ninety Six and authorizing more than $2 million for land acquisition and other improvements. Since then, the park has developed rapidly, with a range of interpretive tools and visitor amenities now in place. Visitorship rose along with the improvements, and in recent years has fluctuated between 50,000 and 70,000 guests annually.

Current site features

The Ninety Six National Historic site currently includes more than 1,000 acres of land and a number of visitor amenities. Visitors begin their tour at a visitors' center that includes interpretive displays, artifacts, a short film and a bookstore. The center is staffed by rangers who are available to answer questions and give guided tours. Visitors then can walk to the "Star Fort" – the site of the siege – on a path that includes interpretive wayside signs. This paved interpretive trail is 1 mile long and also passes by a reconstructed stockade, the former town site of Ninety Six, and historic roads. The site also includes a range of trails, including equestrian trails, which are situated outside the boundaries of the historic core of the site. Finally, the site includes a picnic area, a historic log cabin that was moved to the site and serves as an example of Colonial-era life, and a maintenance facility and staff building.

Relevance to Kettle Creek

The story of the development of Ninety Six illustrates that a concerted effort by local advocates can result in significant improvements to a historic site. While Ninety Six was relatively late in develop-

ing in comparison to many other battlefield sites, it now offers a similar experience to more well-known sites and has achieved the goal of protecting the battlefield site and surrounding landscape from development. The critical element in the park's progress was the relationships that ultimately developed between local advocates and state and federal elected officials. Once these officials saw the promise of the site and the local support it had, they were willing to push for broader recognition and funding for the site.

Battle of Camden site

Figure A.3. Informational kiosk at Battle of Camden site.

Figure A.4. Trail at Battle of Camden site.

Owner: Palmetto Conservation Foundation

History: Revolutionary War battle in 1780

Visitors in 2011: No means of measurement

Size: 477 acres

Staff: None at site

Site history: National Historic Landmark in 1981; Easement obtained from timber company in 2000, land purchases made in following years; Purchases funded by SC Conservation Bank

(Source: Palmetto Conservation Foundation)

Appendix A: Case Studies

Site history

The Battle of Camden site has an even shorter history as a preserved battlefield site than does Ninety Six. In some ways, it had significant obstacles to overcome. Unlike well-known battlefields such as Kings Mountain or Cowpens, the Battle of Camden was a devastating defeat for the Patriots. The site was essentially unpreserved until 2000, when the Palmetto Conservation Foundation, a nonprofit based in Columbia, S.C. but which operates statewide, obtained an easement for 310 acres from a timber company that owned the land. The following year, a group of local, state and federal agencies formed a council to create a plan for the site and to work for preservation and improvements. Since then, the site has obtained funding from the state of South Carolina that enabled it to purchase nearly 500 acres and to create interpretive trails and exhibits. The current goal is to pursue status as either a state or national park, and efforts to achieve either status are ongoing.

Current site features

Recent improvements to the Battle of Camden site have enhanced the visitor experience, but the site, in comparison to Ninety Six and other developed park sites, is a work in progress. There is no visitors' center or staff, but an informational kiosk allows visitors to orient themselves upon arrival. From there, visitors can walk unpaved interpretive trails with wayside signs that allow them to move through the area where the battle took place. There is a small picnic area, as well as some purely recreational trails that wind through the area surrounding the core of the battlefield.

The interpretive trails are simply cleared, unpaved paths, with the trail consisting of sandy soil that is walkable but not accessible for visitors in a wheelchair. The site currently includes no structures or natural features that serve as attractions for visitors. The site also suffers from being bisected by a fairly busy road that detracts from the visitor experience and requires crossing to walk all the trails.

Relevance to Kettle Creek

The Battle of Camden site shows that obstacles to creating a true interpretive battlefield park can be overcome. Despite the fact that the battle was a loss and that a busy road runs through the site, advocates have managed to preserve hundreds of acres of land and to tell the story of the battle at the site. While the ultimate goal of achieving the status of a state or federal park has not yet been achieved, the progress to date is impressive and serves as a model for other sites, including Kettle

Creek.

Camden has relevance in other ways as well. A visitor to both quickly realizes the enormous advantage Kettle Creek has over its neighbor to the east. The road cutting through Camden is a significant distraction to visitors, with the noise and sight of vehicles all but eliminating the opportunity to lose oneself in history. The fact that Kettle Creek is free of such blemishes is a major argument in favor of its development as a battlefield park. The fact that Camden has achieved what it has despite this disadvantage – and despite the fact that it was a crushing defeat for the Patriots rather than the major victory Kettle Creek represented, a fact that perhaps should not but nonetheless does matter in terms of visitor interest – likely bodes well for Kettle Creek's potential.

APPENDIX B PLAN PROCESS AND PUBLIC INPUT

Appendix B: Plan Process and Public Input

The plan process officially began on July 1, 2012 and concluded on April 8, 2013 with adoption of the plan by the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners. The plan gathered input in a variety of ways, including site visits to Kettle Creek and other battlefield sites, one-on-one discussions with various stakeholders, public meetings, and the assistance of an advisory committee formed specifically for the project.

Advisory committee

The creation of the plan involved the assistance of an advisory committee, which provided valuable assistance and guidance along the way. The members of the committee and those who attended committee meetings included the following:

Allen Burton	Stephanie Macchia
Walker Chewning	Sam Moore
Jenny Clarke	Tom Owen
David Crass	Steven Rausch
Pete Gartrell	Louis Ricciuti
Donna Hardy	Jim Rundorff
Joe Harris	Betty Slaton
Charles Heard	David Tyler
Charles Jackson	Darla Wilson
David Jenkins	Larry Wilson

The advisory committee met five times on the following dates:

August 7, 2012	December 11, 2012
October 16, 2012	April 2, 2013
February 26, 2013	

Advisory committee members reviewed drafts and other documents as they became available and provided substantial input during the planning process.

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Appendix B: Plan Process and Public Input

Public forums

The plan's creation also included an open house oriented toward neighboring property owners. This event took place on Saturday, February 9, during the annual Kettle Creek Revolutionary Days commemoration. Numerous property owners attended and were able to review maps and other information and to make comments pertaining to the plan. Property owners were provided with other information, including the draft plan document, as it became available.

The plan also went before the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners on two occasions:

March 14, 2013

April 11, 2013.

Questionnaire

The input process for the plan also included the distribution of a questionnaire for advisory committee members and other stakeholders. A compilation of comments from the questionnaire follows below:

1) What is the most important thing or things the site should offer future visitors?

Interpretive signage.

Visitors center.

Trails.

Improved access/parking.

An understanding of the battle.

Protection of the site.

Access.

Story.

Recreation.

History of Battle/Personal Stories of 18th century farm life.

Re-enactments.

Clear trails.

Weather-resistant signage.

Port-a-potties.

Frequent county maintenance and care.

The tourism/educational experience – comprehensive history, natural history, flora/fauna, geology, ecology.

Recreational opportunities – hiking, biking, picnicking.

Demonstration forest.

Weather station.

Historic literature.

The feeling, even if not correct, of being there just as the battle begins, as if you can horses and voices through the trees.

Interpretative signs or displays that tell the story of the battle and a walking trail that covers the battlefield, especially the creek. Probably 90% of those who have attended the annual battle observance have never seen kettle creek!

The cemetery at the top of War Hill should be relocated to a more appropriate place, providing more useable space for activities and events.

At some point down the road, with additional land, it would be nice to have monuments erected to honor the key individuals who participated in the battle.

As the area is developed, it will be essential to have rest rooms available for visitors year round.

More adequate parking is essential, especially at the base of War Hill.

Interpretative signs to tell the story of the American Revolution in GA as well.

Nature Trails to accommodate those who enjoy the wildlife foliage.

Picnic areas for the leisure of the family. (tied to nature trails). Possible encampment areas.

Bicycle trails leading from Washington, GA down to the entrance of the park.

A Permanent building should be eventually planned for to house the restrooms, small museum, movie area for classroom instruction with seats totaling 50-75.

A park entrance and park exit. If bridge is needed that needs to be planned on the first phase.

2) What, if anything, would you NOT want to see at the site in the future?

Too much "building" stuff – stuff like picnic tables, playgrounds, etc. Keep it simple.

No more gravestones.

Four-wheeling – anything loud.

Visitor center.

Camping.

Commercial development.

Run-down housing.

Disrespect.

I have been asked to mention Cowpens National Battlefield as a model for how to do Kettle Creek but I think Kettle Creek has a charm that would be lost if it modernized or sanitized. I am all for a replica of Carr's fort at the Callaway Plantation, a model of the battlefield at the Mary Willis Library, or a museum room at the Washington Wilkes Museum dedicated to Kettle Creek but let the battlefield site be what it is today.

We once had re-enactors camping out on War Hill and the smoke provided a negative influence on the weekend activity. Encampments should be encouraged but located somewhat downhill from War Hill.

3) What entity is best suited to own or manage the site in the future?

Private

Wilkes County and KCBA

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Wilkes County.

State or county or private.

Wilkes County.

University/local (could serve as research site/laboratory for university).

I think the property should continue to be owned by the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners. I am not fond of how the National Park Service or the state of Georgia maintains their historic sites. The current ownership encourages local involvement.

Probably the existing Kettle Creek battlefield Association in coordination with the Wilkes County Commission.

4) What kinds of purely recreational activities, if any, should be allowed or encouraged at the site?

Bike trails.

Walking trails.

Picnic facilities.

Nature trails.

Bike trails.

Hiking trail.

Bike trail.

Restrooms.

Walking.

Horseback riding.

Camping.

Fishing.

Hiking.

Fishing.

Bike riding.

Walking.

Horseback riding.

Nature/botanical.

Bird watching.

Living history.

Commemorations, family reunions, picnics, and even reenactments of more of the battlefield is obtained.

Hiking trails with plant / tree identifications.

Perhaps a black powder gun range.

5) What kinds of roads or trails do you think the site should include?

The path of the battle.

Wildflower trail – seasonal changes.

Tree ID route.

Rocks and mineral ID.

Hydrology – protection of water supply/stream flow pathway.

An access route using the New Salem Church Road, identifying the Indian trail.

A road to follow the path of the battle, a drive-through park.

A road through the demonstration forest.

A road connecting War Hill with Liberty Church.

Wildflower trail or combination flora/fauna/geology/soils/tree study.

Ecology trail: habitat ID, plant succession as part of demonstration forest.

It would be nice to have a clearly marked interpretive historical trail. Markers should not just tell the story of the battle but also of old monument commemoration, Native American archaeology, prehistoric animals found there etc.

6) What facilities or tools are most important in telling the story of the battle?

Kiosks along roads/trails.

Carry-home pamphlets as copies of kiosk messages.

Kiosks along informative roads and trails including carry-home pamphlets as copies of messages.

Standard video production of the KC battle itself and story behind it for visitor center and CDs for sale.

Genealogies of major battle figures and participants, especially as related to Wilkes family lines.

History of the site itself; original land owners to present.

Standard coffee mugs etc. as reminders of the site visit and its story

I think that most of the interpretive efforts should be in Washington, Georgia, where the exhibits can be supervised and managed without doing damage to the battlefield and without having to hire more people. For the battlefield itself, maybe permanent or temporary plaques along an interpretive trail.

7) Other thoughts/ideas/suggestions/concerns?

We need to connect with UGA or GRU for research and publication of literature which is available for wide distribution. Current literature seems buried within private publisher locations.

K-12 educational materials need to be developed for both class and home use

Whatever is done to interpret the battlefield should include the story of the frontier people of Wilkes County and of the Loyalists.

A long range County/KCBA/State/Private plan to remove isolated-abandoned war graves from old Wilkes County farm & timber land. There are a great many that have already been lost to history due to farming and industry, but there are also MANY that no longer have care or family. Several of our members have graves on their properties. Should they be relocated to KC in a more dignified location of honor?   I think many land owners in Wilkes Co. would go along with this idea.

Native American piece of early KC culture and colonial-frontier trails at the site.

Example of 18th century farming and homesteads that were at/in the area at the time of the battle.

Fishing and Mill techniques of the era on local river and tributaries.

Expansion of the plantation roads of the 18-19th c that following the revolutionary era.

Slave labor on the farm lands in the 1830's--60's as second and third generations expanded holdings.

Area Churches that served as the social foundation for the county from the 1700's----present day.

Examples of camp life, militia dress, poor man's war of farmer against farmer on the frontier.

The Indian raids of the period and the ensuing Creek Indian War that followed the late 1700's into 1815.

Militia units of citizens for survival on a raw and dangerous land of early British/American occupational.

Barter and trades of raw goods (vs) lack of a monetary system.

Livestock care and use of plants for diet in 18th c.

Genealogical research to connect residents with participants – including old farms, home sites.

APPENDIX C
COST ESTIMATES

This section provides cost estimates for various elements recommended in the plan. These estimates are intended to be used only for general informational purposes.

Item: Restroom facility

Type: Vault toilet, no water

Cost: $20,000 - $40,000

Other costs: Ongoing maintenance

Item: War Hill loop trail

Type: Asphalt paved, 8'-10' wide

Cost: $25-$35/linear foot. $55,000 - $77,000

Item: Interpretive signs

Type: 24"x36." Material will depend on resources, but must be long-lasting

Cost: $600 - $1,500 each. Likely 10 needed at minimum. Total cost $6,000 - $15,000.

Other costs: Content creation and design of sign

Item: Informational kiosk

Type: Roofed, weather protected

Cost: $1,000 - $4,000

Item: Picnic tables

Type: Wood/metal/concrete

Cost: $400 - $1,000 each, depending on material

Item: Benches/trail seating

Type: Granite, six-foot wide

Cost: $400 each

APPENDIX D
NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

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