



Vicksburg National Military Park Expansion



Location: Mississippi

Expansion Legislation: S. 305/Thad Cochran and H.R. 2271/Bennie Thompson

Background: More than 100,000 troops waged battle from March 29 until July 4, 1863, in a campaign that proved crucial to the Union victory. High atop the critically important Mississippi River, Jefferson Davis referred to Vicksburg as “the nail head that held the South’s two halves together.” President Lincoln saw it as “the key” to gaining control of the South. After the Confederate surrender at Vicksburg, the town would not celebrate the Fourth of July for 81 years. The fall of Vicksburg came just one day after the Union victory at Gettysburg, and the two events together struck a blow from which the Confederacy was never able to recover.

Along with more than one million annual visitors already, military leaders still travel to Vicksburg to study and teach military strategy and tactics today.

NPCA support:

- NPCA has advocated for this additional to the national park site for three years.

Emily Jones, Southeast Senior Program Manager for the National Parks Conservation Association:

“After more than three years advocating for the expansion of Vicksburg National Military Park, we celebrate ongoing support and passage of this important legislation. Vicksburg played a critical role in the Union victory there and adding core battlefield land at Port Gibson, Raymond, and Champion Hill

to Vicksburg National Military Park will further enhance visitors' understanding of the military campaign and 41-day Union siege."

Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Parker Hills for Battle Focus:

"The US Army described the Vicksburg Campaign as "the most brilliant campaign ever fought on American soil." It is hard to argue with that. In addition, much of the campaign trail has survived the ravages of time and the encroachment of civilization, making it a superb field laboratory for tourists, educators, Civil War enthusiasts, and the military. With that in mind, Friends of Raymond has been working tirelessly to preserve the Raymond battlefield and area, and in 2013 the Mississippi Sesquicentennial Commission of the American Civil War placed interpretive and directional signage along 50 miles of the Vicksburg Campaign trail. And now, 151 years after the fall of Vicksburg, the inclusion of the Raymond, Port Gibson, and Champion Hill battlefields into Vicksburg National Military Park is wonderful news--it is a strategic milestone in preserving a vital piece of American history."

Learn more: <http://bit.ly/1HWEKkP>

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