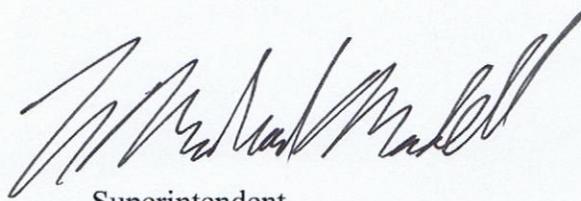


**Vicksburg National Military Park**  
**Land Protection Plan**  
**2010**

Approved by:



Superintendent

01/06/10

Date

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# REGION

Vicksburg National Military Park & National Cemetery



In 1990, Public Law 101-442 broadened the period of history to be interpreted directing: "In administering Vicksburg National Military Park, the Secretary shall interpret the campaign and siege of Vicksburg from April 1862 to July 4, 1863, and the history of Vicksburg under Union occupation during the Civil War and Reconstruction." This expanded interpretive mandate is addressed in the park's recently completed (2010) Comprehensive Long Range Interpretive Plan but has not been incorporated into any of the park's other approved planning documents.

**Vicksburg National Cemetery** was established in 1866 as a central burial ground for soldiers and sailors of the United States who died in operations along the Mississippi River during the Civil War. As established, the national cemetery encompassed 40 acres and was, in accordance with "An act to establish and protect national cemeteries" approved by Congress on February 22, 1867, enclosed with a masonry wall. By 1870, approximately 17,000 interments had been completed, of which number 13,000 are unidentified. In keeping with subsequent acts of Congress, United States veterans of later wars are also interred in the national cemetery that now total approximately 18,300 internments. In 1933 the national cemetery was transferred from the War Department to the National Park Service by Executive Order No. 6228 under the Government Reorganization Act of 1933. Although the cemetery was expanded in 1939 to 117.85 acres, it was closed to further burials in 1961. Today, the only burials are of those individuals who had a reservation prior to 1961.

### **Land Protection Authority**

The enabling act of February 21, 1899, states that "...the Secretary of War shall, upon passage of this Act, proceed to acquire title to the same by voluntary conveyance or under the Act approved August first, eighteen hundred and eighty-eight, entitled 'An Act to authorize the condemnation of land for sites of public buildings, and for other purposes,' or under Act approved February twenty-second, eighteen hundred and sixty-seven, entitled 'An Act to establish and protect national cemeteries,' as he may elect or deem practicable...." The whole of the park was to contain "about one thousand two hundred acres."

In 1963, Public Law 88-37 (77 Stat. 55), "An Act to consolidate Vicksburg National Military Park," authorized the Secretary of the Interior "To quitclaim to the city of Vicksburg, Mississippi, approximately one hundred and fifty-four acres of land, including the roads thereon and the park land abutting said roads...and to quitclaim to Warren County, Mississippi, upon like terms and conditions approximately twenty-four acres of land, including the road and abutting park land...." In exchange for which the Secretary is authorized "to acquire not in excess of five hundred and forty-four acres of land, or interests in land, for addition to Vicksburg National Military Park, such authority to include purchase and condemnation with appropriated funds but not to constitute a limitation upon existing authority to accept donations...."

## Land Protection Plan

### Plan Summary

Current Ownership (acreage):	
Federal Fee	1,737.01
Federal Less-than-Fee	2.55
Private	50.61
Public Non-Federal	4.84

The park's authorize land ceiling is 1,748 acres. The figures above include the grounds of Vicksburg National Cemetery, which is a separate entity administered by Vicksburg National Military Park, that encompasses 117.85 acres. Thus, the park can acquire up to 71 additional acres within its current ceiling.

### Area Purpose

**Vicksburg National Military Park** is to conform to the purpose stated in the establishing act of February 21, 1899, (30 Stat. 841), (Section 1): "...to commemorate the campaign and siege and defense of Vicksburg, and to preserve the history of the battles and operations of the siege and defense on the ground where they were fought and were carried on...." The duties of the Secretary of War as stated in the same act were (Section 5): "...to restore the forts and the lines of fortification, the parallels and the approaches of the two armies, or so much thereof as may be necessary to the purpose of the park; to open and construct and to repair such roads as may be necessary to said purposes, and to ascertain and mark with historical tablets...the lines of battle of the troops engaged in the assaults, and the lines held by the troops during the siege and defense of Vicksburg, the headquarters of General Grant and of General Pemberton, and other historical points of interest pertaining to the siege and defense of Vicksburg within the park or its vicinity...;" and (Section 8) to restore "the field to its condition at the time of the battle...." The enabling act also provides (Section 6) "That it shall be lawful for any State that had troops engaged in the siege and defense of Vicksburg to enter upon the lands of the Vicksburg national military park for the purpose of ascertaining and marking the lines of battle of its troops engaged therein...."

Therefore, the management of Vicksburg National Military Park is mandated to preserve, restore, and protect the battlefield, earthworks, fortifications, structures, monuments, memorials, and other outstanding historic features within its jurisdiction in such a way as to provide the visitor with a pleasing and rewarding experience. The park also is charged with furthering the visitor's understanding and appreciation of the ordeal experienced by all persons of both North and South during the Vicksburg campaign, the dates of which were established by the War Department as March 29-July 4, 1863.

In 1990, Public Law 101-442 (104 Stat. 1019), "An Act to expand Vicksburg National Military Park," authorized the Secretary of the Interior to "acquire by donation, exchange, or purchase with donated or appropriated funds, approximately two and five-tenths acres of land in Madison Parish, Louisiana, known generally as the Grant's Canal property."

In 2002, Public Law 107-238 (116 Stat. 1486), "An Act to modify the boundary of Vicksburg National Military Park to include the property known as Pemberton's Headquarters," authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire "by purchase, donation, or exchange," the property known as Pemberton's Headquarters and up to one acre of land adjacent to or near Pemberton's Headquarters for parking and other facilities, "except that each property may only be acquired with the consent of the owner thereof."

### **Land Protection Problems and Issues**

The enabling act of 1899 provided for the establishment of the park along the lines of the Union siege and Confederate defense perimeters that ringed Vicksburg in the summer of 1863, "the whole containing about one thousand two hundred acres." The park, as established, thus formed a huge crescent around the city beginning on the north at Fort Hill, then curving to the east, south, and southwest back to the Mississippi River below Vicksburg. At the time of its establishment, the park boundary ranged from one to more than two miles from the city limits. However, over the years, Vicksburg has grown in population and expanded to the boundary of the park. Beginning in the early 1950s, park and city officials began discussing the possibility of the Federal government releasing certain park lands to provide an avenue of expansion for Vicksburg. These discussions resulted in the 1963 passage of PL 88-37 by which 154 acres of park land were quitclaimed to the City of Vicksburg and 24 acres were quitclaimed to Warren County, provided that title to these lands "shall revert to the United States if its parklike character is not maintained." In exchange, the park was authorized to "acquire not in excess of five hundred and forty-four acres of land, or interests in land, for addition to Vicksburg National Military Park, such authority to include purchase and condemnation with appropriated funds but not to constitute a limitation upon existing authority to accept donations."

Despite this land exchange, the city expanded beyond the park and today continues to grow north, south, and east of the park. Thus, Vicksburg National Military Park has become an island of green in an urban sea, almost surrounded by residential, commercial, and light industrial development. In recent years, there has been an explosion of development along the U.S. Highway 61 North Bypass that runs parallel to and within a few hundred yards of the park's eastern boundary. This development has destroyed vegetative screens and desired viewsheds, and today threatens adverse development immediately adjacent to the park tour road.

Elsewhere along the boundary, especially the line that parallels Confederate Avenue, encroachment on and the adverse use of park land continues as a serious problem. In

addition, some sections of the boundary have been "lost" due to erosion and encroachment that has destroyed, buried, and moved boundary stones. Although limited resurveys of some of the most serious park boundary problem areas have been performed to identify and eliminate encroachments, a comprehensive resurvey of the entire boundary is needed to assist in developing a strategy to deal with the issue. In addition, numerous tracts acquired since 1990 need to be monumented to reflect Federal ownership and help prevent encroachments on these lands.

The park's tour road, by circumstance and design, is located almost adjacent to the boundary of the park, which leaves only a thin growth of vegetation to screen modern development from the view of visitors. The resulting views of this development, more pronounced during the winter months when foliage is down, detract significantly from the visitor's park experience. In addition to the sight and sound distractions, construction adjacent to the park destabilizes the fragile loess soil resulting in the erosion of park resources. The illegal dumping of household garbage, including toxic items such as tires, car batteries, and shingles, adjacent to the park creates litter in the park, is damaging to wildlife and vegetation, and has polluted streams and wetlands.

The park desires to acquire the parcels herein identified in part to extend the buffer between the park tour road and adjacent development while opportunity still exists. This would afford better protection of park resources and provide for a more enjoyable visitor experience.

The park's most pressing land protection issues are as follows (not necessarily in priority order):

- **Expansion of Interstate 20:**

The Mississippi Department of Transportation along with the Federal Highways Administration are currently drafting plans for the expansion of Interstate 20 through Vicksburg. The project seeks to expand the interstate from its current four lanes to six lanes between U.S. Highway 61 North and South. To facilitate this work it will be necessary to widen the interstate frontage roads that will serve for a number of years to accommodate the interstate traffic. As the north Frontage Road in particular abuts current and former park lands, this project poses dramatic, possibly adverse impacts on park resources. Specifically:

1. It will bring the freeway closer to park boundaries and the boundaries of former park lands.
2. The possibility exists for requests for new rights-of-way that would impinge on parklands.
3. The threat of further visual and noise intrusion.
4. Possible adverse impact on park monuments from increased vibration.
5. The possible addition of commercial development pressure along the "upgraded" frontage roads.

- **Zoning: City/County:**

To help protect the resources of Vicksburg National Military Park and those of former park land, the City of Vicksburg enacted an ordinance that prohibits development within twenty-five feet of the park and former park lands. However, it does not prohibit clearing and grading activities that may affect park resources and viewsheds. Although this ordinance has produced significant benefits for the park, additional zoning restrictions may be necessary in the future, so park officials should make these needs known to the Board of Mayor and Alderman.

At present, Warren County has no zoning ordinances of any kind and this adversely impacts the park along its north and northeast boundary. Adjacent landowners are free to clear and grade and even do construction right up to the boundary line. Park officials need to continue dialogue with the County Board of Supervisors to gain protections afforded by zoning and restrictions on development adjacent to the park or within its viewshed.

- **PL 88-37:**

In 1963, PL 88-37 (see *Appendices*) authorized the National Park Service to quitclaim 154 acres to the City of Vicksburg provided that the City “maintain the parklike character” of the land, otherwise it “shall revert to the United States if its parklike character is not maintained.” A follow-up document, signed in 1969, attempted to define the term “parklike,” but the term remains vague and agreement on a definition still does not exist between the park and City. Consequently, for twenty years following passage of PL 88-37 resources associated with the siege and defense of Vicksburg were destroyed through construction of roads, driveways to private residences, accesses to commercial interests, buildings, and even privately owned structures such as garages and storage sheds built on or across former park property. People even used the former park lands for private gardens and grazing of animals. Since 1985, however, park officials have been exercising the “watchdog” authority implied in PL 88-37 to prevent any further degradation of former park lands. Still, short of exercising the reverter clause, the park must rely on the cooperation of city officials to ensure no further loss of resources and to maintain public access to the scores of monuments and markers that dot former park lands. The level of cooperation fluctuates with each change in administration at the park and at City Hall.

Although there is little support within the National Park Service to exercise the reverter due to the accumulated impacts of city management and the burden of maintenance, City officials have from time to time expressed an interest in returning the land to the park. As long as the reverter is authorized by legislation, the possibility exists that the City of Vicksburg could return the land to the park, except for the roadways. To effect such a reverter would involve the Federal courts and possibly require additional Congressional action due to the encroachments, driveways, utilities, etc. that would pose long term management problems for the National Park Service. Most notably, the park could not

appropriately manage these lands within its current or anticipated operational budgets. Should the reverter be exercised, a base funding increase would be necessary.

The National Park Service should evaluate the integrity of former park lands and determine on the need to exercise the reverter clause relative to all or part of former park lands quitclaimed to the City. Depending on the evaluation, the National Park Service should then either seek legislation to remove the reverter or reach agreement with the City as to a definition of "parklike character."

- **Abraham Access (Tract 05-112):**

Situated south of Confederate Avenue, between Fort Hill and Tennessee Circle, this tract was once accessed by a road that connected with Confederate Avenue. On February 21, 1969, Fried and Edward J. Abraham quitclaimed their right, title and interest to the existing right of access to their property to the United States in exchange for which the National Park Service agreed to construct an access road on park lands from the public road at Lovers Lane westward to the Abraham property line. Although such a road was constructed and accepted by the City of Vicksburg, it was poorly constructed, poorly maintained, and is no longer serviceable. In 2005, when heirs of Freid and Edward Abraham requested the government to construct a new access, a Federal solicitor ruled that the National Park Service had met its obligation to construct a road and was not responsible for constructing a new road or rehabilitating the existing road. However, the ruling stating that the National Park Service was still obligated to grant a right of access across park property.

Due to the adverse effects construction of such a road would have on park resources, and its proximity to Confederate Avenue, the park seeks to acquire the Abraham tract. Acquisition would have the added benefit of preserving several hundred feet of earthworks constructed by the Union army during the occupation of Vicksburg in 1863, along with possible archaeological resources associated with the siege of Vicksburg and history of Vicksburg under Union occupation, and provide the park with resources to assist in its mandated interpretation of the history of Vicksburg under Union occupation through Reconstruction.

(See also *Recommendations: Confederate Avenue.*)

- **Vicksburg Campaign Study:**

PL 106-487 (2000) charged the National Park Service with conducting a three-year long study to identify sites associated with the Vicksburg campaign in the states of Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Tennessee. (A Technical Correction to the bill added Kentucky to the list of states included in the study area.) The legislation further charged the National Park Service to make recommendations for long term preservation and interpretation of those sites, to include recommendations for new units or additions to existing units of the national park system.

The study makes recommendations that, if implemented, will dramatically increase the land mass administered by Vicksburg National Military Park. Specifically, the study recommends that "Champion Hill [located in Hinds County, Mississippi] would be included in the national park system and managed as a discontinuous unit of Vicksburg National Military Park." The battlefield is listed as a National Historic Landmark by the Department of the Interior and, in 1993, the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission identified Champion Hill as one of the Civil War's 384 principal battlefields. The core area of the battlefield as identified by the American Battlefield Protection Program contains approximately 5,000 acres. The State of Mississippi currently owns 830.0 acres of the battlefield at Champion Hill, including the historic Coker House, along with an easement on 344 acres which it seeks to deed to the National Park Service to form the nucleus of the new unit. In addition to these lands the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) has title to almost 60 acres of land that it seeks to turn over to the National Park Service. The CWPT is actively working to preserve additional acreage through purchase or easements.

The study also recommends that Port Gibson battlefield, in Claiborne County, Mississippi, be added to the national park system and managed as a discontinuous unit of Vicksburg National Military Park. Port Gibson battlefield is entered on the National Register and has been identified by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission as one of the Civil War's 384 principal battlefields. The American Battlefield Protection Program further identified approximately 5,000 acres to comprise the core area of the battlefield. At present the State of Mississippi holds title to 16.5 acres and an easement on 622 additional acres that it seeks to transfer to the National Park Service.

Another nearby battlefield, Raymond, was also identified by the Vicksburg Campaign Trail Study as being important to the campaign, but at a slightly lower level of significance. The importance of this battlefield is currently being reconsidered, and an initiative to also add Raymond as a unit of Vicksburg National Military Park is evolving. The Friends of Raymond, the 501(c)(3) corporation that currently owns a portion of the battlefield, is supportive of the initiative. The Friends own approximately 140 acres in fee and have an easement on an additional four acres. Raymond battlefield is entered on the National Register and has been identified by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission as one of the Civil War's 384 principal battlefields.

The Vicksburg Campaign Trail Study further recommends that the reverter clause contained in PL 88-37 relative to 154 acres of former park lands in Vicksburg be evaluated for possible implementation in full or in part. In either case, exercising the reverter will present a myriad of issues for the park.

- **Encroachment**

Encroachment and the adverse use of park lands along the boundary continues as a serious problem and is expected to threaten a greater number of acres as development continues to engulf the park. Most of this encroachment is in the form of neighbors who used park lands for yards and for construction of lawn sheds, garages, and other storage

facilities, or to clear vegetation to prevent park trees or limbs of trees from falling during storms and damaging their homes. Since the mid-1980s, however, park officials have managed to stop further encroachment and are working to roll back existing encroachment. With the ever-mounting external pressure, the situation calls for steady vigilance to safeguard park resources.

Due to the explosion of development along U.S. Highway 61 North bypass that includes the River Region Medical Center, Sherman Avenue School, and a host of commercial properties, the northeast corner of the park, near Grant's Headquarters, is the area currently at greatest risk for possible encroachment. The park has identified a number of tracts adjacent to the boundary in this area for acquisition through the Land Acquisition Ranking System (LARS) as well as in this Land Protection Plan. As there is only a narrow buffer between the park tour road and boundary along most of Grant Avenue and Grant Circle, the park places a high priority on acquisition of the desired parcels.

Another area of the park at great risk for possible encroachment in the near future is the South Loop, especially those areas that parallel or abut North Frontage Road. As expansion of Interstate 20 and the frontage roads is imminent it poses a number of threats to park resources, including encroachment.

(See also *Recommendations: South Loop/Confederate Avenue.*)

- **Private Access to Tour Road (Tract 05-108):**

As part of the Mission 66 program, Vicksburg National Military Park worked with the City of Vicksburg and Warren County to provide for a self-enclosed tour route through the park by closing public and private accesses and connections to the tour road. In return the National Park Service constructed alternative avenues of travel (Mission 66 and new Jackson Road) for local traffic to get from one side of the park to the other without interrupting the flow of park visitors.

The only remaining private property having a legal connection to the park tour road is owned by the heirs of Dr. Lucian Ferris (Tract 05-108). The property is situated atop Fort Hill, park Tour Stop 9, a popular river overlook. The 3-acre parcel has a single residence on it and is bordered by the park on two sides (north and west). The Ferris family has been an excellent park neighbor and supporter, but the possibility exists that future owners may not be so cooperative or sensitive to park concerns. The Ferris house may be eligible for listing on the National Register due to its architectural design and age. Thus, should the park ever acquire the property it would be difficult to remove the building and the National Park Service would have to find an adaptive use for the building which would create a recurring expense for the park.

(See also *Recommendations: Confederate Avenue.*)

- **Scenic Easements (Tracts 02-105, 02-123, 02-125)**

The park holds scenic easements on 3 tracts totaling 0.89 acres. The terms of the easements require that the “Zoning Ordinance of the City of Vicksburg, Mississippi” of 1946 relative to improvements will be enforced. However, these ordinances further restrict these tracts to a “U-1 White Residence District.” In light of the segregation-oriented nature of the ordinance, the park has requested a solicitor’s review (2010) to determine if the provisions, restrictions, and regulations that deal with improvements are still valid. Regardless, it is recommended that two of the three tracts be acquired in fee simple, the non-historic structures removed, and the area reforested to provide for a vegetative screen to protect park viewsheds. The tracts desired for acquisition are: 02-123 and 02-125. The third parcel, 02-105, is bordered on three sides by residential development. As acquisition of this parcel would lead to numerous problems for the park and its neighbors due to current city ordinances that prohibit development within twenty-five feet of the park boundary, it is recommended that the scenic easement on this tract be extinguished.

(See also *Recommendations: South Loop/Confederate Avenue.*)

- **South Fort (Tract 01-107):**

At present, there is no public access to the park’s South Fort Unit, one of three detached units overlooking the Mississippi River south of Vicksburg. (The other units, Louisiana Circle and Navy Circle, have access from South Washington Street.) South Fort is historically significant as it served as the southern anchor of the Confederate defense line around Vicksburg. A private parking area situated between South Fort and South Washington Street prevents public access to the unit. The park maintains War Department era exhibits at South Fort to interpret the important role the area played during the campaign and siege, such as the shelling of Union forces involved in digging Grant’s Canal, which is a detached unit of the park across the Mississippi River in Madison Parish, Louisiana. Acquisition of the parking area should be a high priority in order to provide for public access to South Fort.

(See also *Recommendations: South Fort.*)

- **Kansas City Southern Railroad:**

The Kansas City Southern Railroad (historic Southern Railroad of Mississippi) is instrumental in the telling of the story of the Vicksburg campaign. The railroad predates the Civil War and was a vital factor in the Confederate decision to construct fortifications at Vicksburg. The railroad, which connected Vicksburg with Jackson and, via Jackson, points elsewhere in the Confederacy, enabled the shipment of heavy ordnance to Vicksburg. Confederate ordnance mounted in battery on the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River at Vicksburg, were not only trained on the river, but denied the river’s use to Northern commerce. It was also along this rail line that the Confederate garrison received its supplies of food, clothing, medicine, and ammunition, as well as

reinforcements of troops. As Vicksburg's lifeline, the railroad was the target of Grierson's Raid in April 1863, which was designed to sever that line of supply and isolate the Confederate garrison in Vicksburg.

Due to the high volume of traffic along the rails and the traffic congestion and noise that results in Vicksburg, the City of Vicksburg and railroad officials have for years been discussing the feasibility of relocating the tracks south of the city. Should this occur, the line that bisects the park will no longer be used. Removal of the rails and ties would greatly diminish the park's ability to highlight the important role the railroad played in the Vicksburg campaign.

Agreement needs to be reached with the Kansas City Southern Railroad that, should the line be relocated, it will either donate or sell the parcel that bisects the park to the National Park Service, along with the rails and ties in order for the area to maintain its historic appearance.

(See also *Recommendations: Kansas City Southern Railroad.*)

- **Private Inholdings and R.O.W.s:**

**Tracts 02-159 (King Road) and 02-160 (Warren Clarke Road)** are platted city streets that were never constructed but intended to serve the Warren Clarke Subdivision which has subsequently been acquired as part of the park. These two R.O.W.s should be acquired by donation through quitclaim by the City of Vicksburg. The R.O.W. for a third platted street, Dyer Road, should also be acquired through donation by the City of Vicksburg once Tract 02-165 is secured.

(See also *Recommendations: South Loop.*)

**Rodenbaugh Drive:** Once the tracts of land along Rodenbaugh Drive are acquired, the National Park Service should petition the City of Vicksburg to quitclaim its R.O.W. over the stretch of Rodenbaugh Drive that is currently or will be encompassed within the park.

(See also *Recommendations: South Loop.*)

**Hebrew Cemetery** (See Land Status Map 02): Situated between Clay Street and Baldwin Ferry Road (park tour road), and just west of the park's Visitor Center is post-Civil War Anshe Chesed Cemetery which is operated by Anshe Chesed Temple, 2414 Grove Street, Vicksburg (601-636-1126). The cemetery occupies the site of Second Texas Lunette, which was one of nine major Confederate forts that ringed the city of Vicksburg during the siege. The cemetery was established shortly after the Civil War and more than thirty years prior to the park authorization measure. Cemetery officials have allowed the park to erect interpretive markers and for park visitors to freely walk within the cemetery. Thus the presence and limited operation of the cemetery poses no threat to park resources. Acquisition is not recommended.

(See also *Recommendations: Private Inholdings/R.O.W.s.*)

**Jackson Road:**

Once Tracts 03-124 and 03-126 are acquired, the National Park Service should request that the City of Vicksburg or Warren County Board of Supervisors quitclaim its R.O.W. over the Jackson Road, from its intersection with Tilghman Circle Road, east to the park boundary.

(See also *Recommendations: Confederate Avenue.*)

**Tract 04-153** is a post-Civil War cemetery that belongs to the Bethlehem Burial Society, which is affiliated with Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church, 3055 North Washington Street, Vicksburg (601-630-9278). Only twice in the past thirty years have church officials requested that the access road, which connects with the park tour road between Tour Stops 6-7, be opened to facilitate burials. Thus the presence and limited operation of the cemetery poses no threat to park resources or inconvenience for park staff. Acquisition is not recommended at this time.

(See also *Recommendations: Private Inholdings/R.O.W.s.*)

**Tract 05-105, present-day Fort Hill Drive.** Historically known as the Yazoo City Road, Warren County quitclaimed this parcel to the National Park Service in 1936. By agreement the United States made improvements to the road that was then reconveyed to the County, which is responsible for maintenance and jurisdiction. As the National Park Service is not responsible for maintenance of the road nor has jurisdiction on the road, it is recommended that Tract 05-105 be quitclaimed to Warren County.

The old Yazoo City Road is known as Connecting Avenue, within the park, and runs through the parking area at the U.S.S. Cairo Museum, then becomes Givens Road before it connects with North Washington Street (U.S. Business Highway 61). The National Park Service needs to petition the Warren County Board of Supervisors to quitclaim its R.O.W. over this road from the park boundary, near Fort Hill on the south, to its connection with North Washington Street (U.S. Business Highway 61), north of Vicksburg National Cemetery.

(See also *Recommendations: Vicksburg National Cemetery, and Private Inholdings/R.O.W.s.*)

**Howe Lane:** Historically this road was part of Graveyard Road which served as the avenue of approach for Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's XV Union Army Corps. Once the park acquires the land bordering this road between the park boundary and Sherman Avenue, it should petition the Warren County Board of Supervisors to abandoned the road. The park would utilize the road as an unofficial access for maintenance purposes.

(See also *Recommendations: Grant's Headquarters.*)

## Alternatives and Analysis

As has happened with many park areas in the eastern United States, Vicksburg National Military Park has become an island of green in an urban sea as the city of Vicksburg has grown around it. With each passing year, the park “moves” closer to the center of the community which brings development up to the boundary of the park and increases adverse encroachment. This development adversely impacts the historic scene and, therefore, the visitors’ ability to understand the events for which the park was established to commemorate. Some of this development also adversely affects park resources as it has introduced erosion in several areas along the park boundary that threatens monuments, markers, and components of the park’s infrastructure. It also affects the park’s natural and archaeological resources, including damage to wetlands and animal habitat, and has resulted in increased occurrences of dumping of household garbage, appliances, and even toxic materials in the park.

Rather than continue the current haphazard approach to surveying and monumenting contested sections of the boundary, the park needs a comprehensive boundary survey to define the magnitude of the encroachment problem so plans can be made to deal with it. It is further recommended that the park collaborate with the City of Vicksburg to survey those lands quitclaimed to the city to identify the encroachments, to evaluate any changes to the properties, and to develop a strategy to restore the original integrity of the former park lands.

To better protect park resources, provide for visitor enjoyment, and eliminate avenues of access for trespass, it is vital that the boundary of Vicksburg National Military be extended wherever and whenever possible within the authorized acreage ceiling by acquisition of these desired parcels by purchase, donation, or condemnation (see **Land Protection Authority**). Among the alternatives examined were:

**No Action:** No action would result in continued unchecked development along the park boundary, much of it adverse to park resources. It will also result in destruction of viewsheds, loss of vegetative screen and animal habitat, adverse impacts to wetlands, and exacerbate the already severe problem of erosion that threatens historic topography (topography is essential to understanding the story of the siege of Vicksburg), monuments, markers, cannon, earthworks, archaeological resources, and components of the park’s infrastructure.

**Easements (less than fee):** Easements could have the desired effect, but they are less than desirable. Easements require constant vigilance by park officials and willingness on the part of city/county officials for enforcement. They are also subject to change or nullification based on ordinances. The park currently has easements on three parcels but, due to changes in city ordinances, their validity is now questionable. Similarly, in the future, new or amended ordinances could render easements null and void.

**Acquisition (fee) by Purchase, Donation, or Condemnation:** The park has the legislative authority to purchase or condemn property or accept it through donation. Fee ownership is the preferred alternative as it allows for full Federal protection of land and its associated resources. It also allows for public use, which is not always the case with easements.

## Park Map Showing Desired Tracts

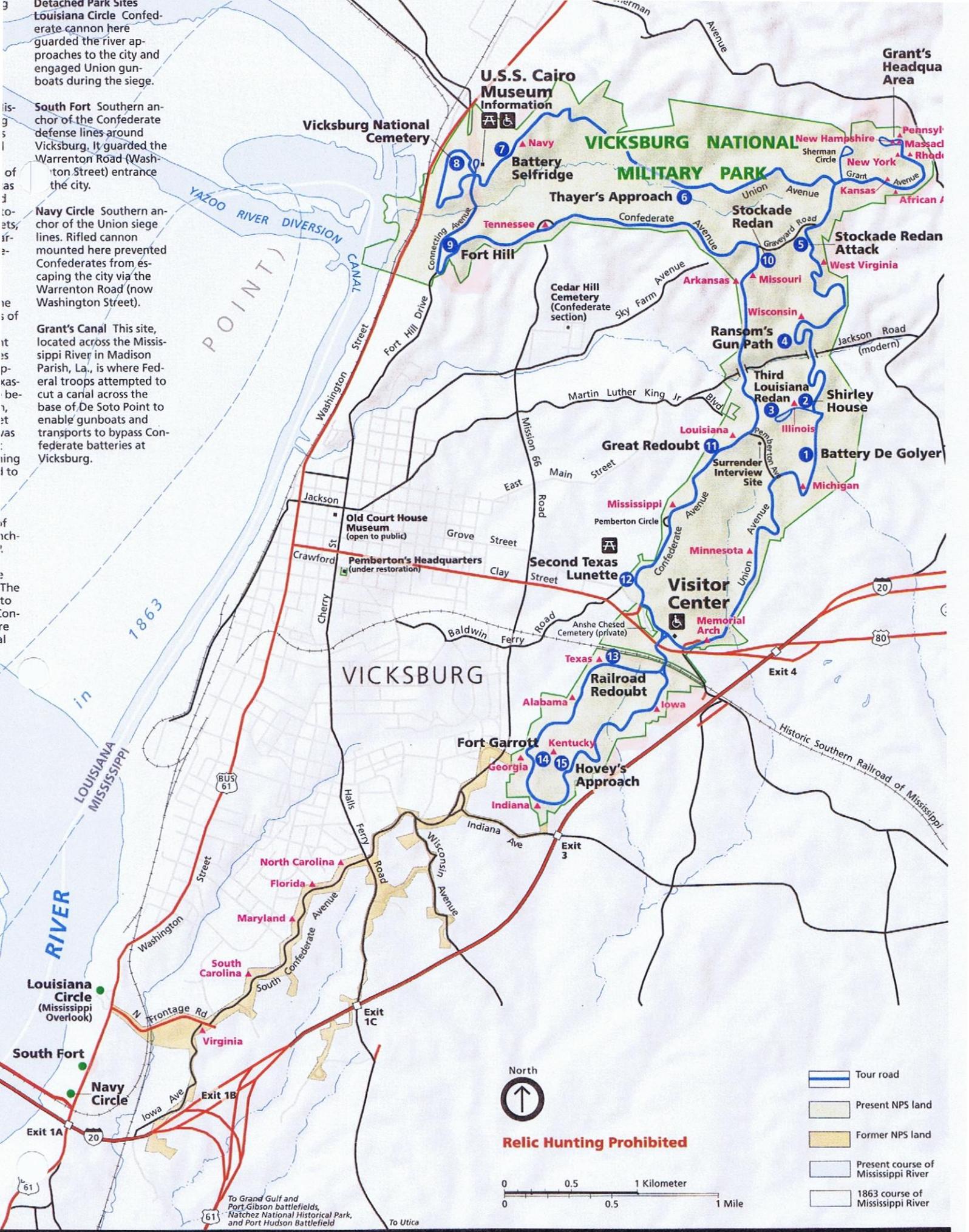
**Detached Park Sites**  
**Louisiana Circle** Confederate cannon here guarded the river approaches to the city and engaged Union gunboats during the siege.

**South Fort** Southern anchor of the Confederate defense lines around Vicksburg. It guarded the Warrenton Road (Washington Street) entrance the city.

**Navy Circle** Southern anchor of the Union siege lines. Rifled cannon mounted here prevented Confederates from escaping the city via the Warrenton Road (now Washington Street).

**Grant's Canal** This site, located across the Mississippi River in Madison Parish, La., is where Federal troops attempted to cut a canal across the base of De Soto Point to enable gunboats and transports to bypass Confederate batteries at Vicksburg.

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**Grant's Headqua Area**

**U.S.S. Cairo Museum Information**

**Vicksburg National Cemetery**

**VICKSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK**

**Battery Selfridge**

**Thayer's Approach**

**Stockade Redan**

**Fort Hill**

**Stockade Redan Attack**

**Ransom's Gun Path**

**Third Louisiana Redan**

**Shirley House**

**Battery De Golyer**

**Great Redoubt**

**Second Texas Lunette**

**Visitor Center**

**Railroad Redoubt**

**Fort Garrott**

**Hovey's Approach**

**Louisiana Circle (Mississippi Overlook)**

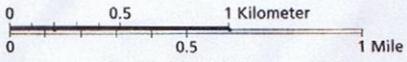
**South Fort**

**Navy Circle**

-  Tour road
-  Present NPS land
-  Former NPS land
-  Present course of Mississippi River
-  1863 course of Mississippi River



**Relic Hunting Prohibited**



To Grand Gulf and Port Gibson battlefields, Natchez National Historical Park, and Port Hudson Battlefield

To Utica

## Recommendations

For the purpose of this plan, the desired tracts will be grouped according to their location adjacent to the current park boundary.

### Vicksburg National Cemetery:

06-155 Jeffrey                      Tax Map 87-7, Tract 18              0.38 acres  
City of Vicksburg (R.O.W. Old Yazoo City Rd.)      Tax Map 87-7

Recommendations: Back taxes and assessments on Tract 06-155 have resulted in ownership passing from one land investment company after another since 2003. If the back taxes and assessments are not paid by August 25, 2011, title to the tract will be turned over to the State of Mississippi. The park needs to monitor this situation. Should the State of Mississippi gain title to this property the park should seek a donation from the state. It is important to note that under a current city ordinance there can be no development within 25' of the park's boundary. As this tract is bordered by the park on three sides, and on the fourth side by a city road with its required setback, the tract is virtually non-developable. However, to provide for greater ease in marking and managing the boundary, if Tract 06-155 cannot be purchased from a willing seller or secured by donation and title continues to pass from one land investment company after another, it is recommended that the park's condemnation authority be exercised to secure this tract.

The National Park Service should petition the City of Vicksburg and/or Warren County to extinguish its R.O.W. to those segments of the Old Yazoo City Road within its jurisdiction beginning at its intersection with North Washington Street (U.S. Business Highway 61 North) running south to where Fort Hill Drive (also historic Yazoo City Road) exits the park.

(See also *Land Protection Problems and Issues: Private Holdings/R.O.W.s*)

### Grant's Headquarters:

04-176 Pugh (Parcel C)	Tax Map 86	15+/- acres
Pugh (Parcel D)	Tax Map 86, Tract 1.2	15+/- acres
04-173 Stong	Tax Map 86, Tract 56	0.5 acres
04-172 (04-174) Pettway	Tax Map 86, Tract 57	0.5 acres
04-170 Lighthouse Assembly of God	Tax Map 86, Tract 7	4.0 acres
04-167 Ervin	Tax Map 86, Tract 40	6.8 acres
04-168 Kleinman	Tax Map 86, Tract 38	1.5 acres
04-169 Taylor	Tax Map 86, Tract 39	6.8 acres
Warren County (R.O.W. Howe Lane)	Tax Map 86	0.3 acres

Recommendations: As the area around Grant's Headquarters is the current focus of rapid development, and as the park's boundary in this area is too thin to provide adequate

protection to park resources, especially in terms of screening, it is recommended that funding be secured for acquisition of all desired tracts.

Once tracts 04-176 (Parcel C), 04-173, and 04-172 (04-174) are secured, the National Park Service should petition the Warren County Board of Supervisors to extinguish its R.O.W. the length of Howe Lane.

(See also *Land Protection Problems and Issues: Private Inholdings/R.O.W.s*)

**South Loop:**

02-123 Lowery	(have scenic easement)	Tax Map 107, Tract 13	0.27 acres
02-125 Graham	(have scenic easement)	Tax Map 107, Tract 14	0.10 acres
Harris		Tax Map 107, Tract 10	1.00 acres
Lowery		Tax Map 107, Tract 11	0.60 acres
Cloud		Tax Map 107, Tract 12	0.30 acres
Harris		Tax Map 107, Tract 17	1.00 acres
Harris		Tax Map 107, Tract 18	4.00 acres
Harris		Tax Map 107, Tract 19	3.00 acres
Marsalis		Tax Map 107, Tract 20	1.50 acres
Pratt		Tax Map 107, Tract 94	2.50 acres
Plumbing + Pipefitters		Tax Map 107, Tract 6.1	1.00 acres
Bradley (historic Murphy)		Tax Map 108-4, Tract 56	0.30 acres
02-159 City of Vicksburg	(R.O.W. King Road)		0.18 acres
02-160 City of Vicksburg	(R.O.W. Warren Clarke)		0.20 acres
City of Vicksburg	(R.O.W. Dyer Road)		
City of Vicksburg	(R.O.W. Rodenbaugh Drive)		

Recommendations: With residential and commercial development rapidly encircling the park's South Loop, physical, visual, and audible intrusions have been introduced that mar visitors' park experience and threaten park resources. These adverse impacts are expected to increase dramatically with the pending expansion of Interstate 20. To provide greater protection to park resources through more adequate buffer and to enhance the visitor experience, it is recommended that all these tracts be acquired. Residential and commercial development that currently exists on some of these tracts should be removed and those tracts revegetated to provide much needed screening against the commercial development that exist along the North Frontage Road and Interstate 20.

Once tracts 02-123, 02-125, and the Harris (Tract 10), Lowery (Tract 11), and Cloud (Tract 12) are secured, the park should move to have the City extinguish its R.O.W. for that portion of Rodenbaugh Drive within the boundary of the park to allow removal of the road.

Regardless of acquisition efforts, the National Park Service should petition the City of Vicksburg to extinguish its R.O.W. to three platted streets (02-259, 02-160, and Dyer Road.)

(See also *Land Protection Problems and Issues: Private Inholdings/R.O.W.s.*)

**Union Avenue:**

06-147 Hill (Meacham Meadow)	Tax Map 87, Tract 8.2	4.0 acres
Miss. Regional Housing Authority	Tax Map 87, Tract 5	4.0 acres

Recommendations: There currently exists an inadequate buffer between the park tour road and boundary along North Union Avenue, just east of the Navy Monument. At present, the desired tracts (06-147 and that owned by the Miss. Regional Housing Authority) are in a natural state, which is the park's desired use for these lands. However, excavation of a borrow pit has occurred on the Miss. Regional Housing Authority tract (not the portion desired by the park) which, if it continues, will destabilize the base of the ridge on which the park tour road and the U.S. Navy Monument (the park's tallest monument) are located. Further destabilization of this area could result in damage to both the tour road and the Navy Monument.

The Hill tract is further desired to provide for more adequate protection of sensitive structures such as the Cairo Restoration Shop and the Archival Storage Facility, where much of the park's priceless collection of artifacts and archival documents are stored.

Both tracts should be acquired.

**Confederate Avenue:**

02-105 Harris	Tax Map 95-2, Tract 209	.25 acres
05-108 Ferris	Tax Map 87, Tract 14	3.0 acres
05-112 Varner (historic Abraham)	Tax Map 87, Tract 15	34 acres
Great Redoubt:		
03-124 Curtis	Tax Map 95-4, Tract 106,	1.3 acres
03-126 Marley	Tax Map 95-4, Tract 105,	0.5 acres
City of Vicksburg	Tax Map 95-4 (R.O.W. Jackson Road)	

Recommendations: (See comments under "**Land Protection Problems and Issues**": Abraham Tract and Private Access to Tour Road.)

The Great Redoubt was the largest and most formidable fort in the Confederate defense line around Vicksburg. It is also the highest point in Warren County atop which stands the Louisiana Monument. Designated as Tour Stop 11 on the park's tour route, the Great Redoubt provides visitors with the opportunity to appreciate the terrain features that made Vicksburg a natural fortress and the strength of the city's man-made fortifications. Unfortunately, the tour road is situated in the ditch, or dry moat, that fronted the fort and, as there is no pathway into the fort from the parking area at Tour Stop 11, the steep terrain deters most visitors from accessing the Louisiana Monument.

Acquisition of these tracts is recommended to allow re-routing the tour road behind the Great Redoubt via the historic Jackson Road. This would enable the park to open a stretch of the historic Jackson Road, the road over which General Ulysses S. Grant and the Union Army of the Tennessee marched victorious into Vicksburg on July 4, 1863. It would further enable the park to remove the existing tour road from in front of Great Redoubt to restore the dry moat. A parking area behind the monument could be constructed with a walkway leading into the fort, from which point visitors would see a grand vista and be able to comprehend the natural formidability of the city and its fortifications.

The park currently has a scenic easement on 02-105 relative to improvements only. It is recommended that the easement be extinguished as acquisition of the property is not desired or recommended.

**Pemberton's Headquarters:**

Wiggins	Tax Map 94-Q, Tract 33	0.15 acres
Church of the Holy Trinity	Tax Map 94-Q, Tract 60	0.30 acres

Recommendations: PL 107-238 authorized the acquisition of Pemberton's Headquarters, which is located at 1018 Crawford Street in downtown Vicksburg. Acquisition was completed in 2003. The legislation also authorizes the National Park Service to acquire up to one acre of additional land in proximity for visitor parking. (Currently only on-street parking is available. Due to the anticipated popularity of the site, City officials have expressed concern over possible parking congestion and traffic. Thus the National Park Service needs to be proactive in providing additional parking.) The vacant portion of Tract 33, situated between Pemberton's Headquarters and the Balfour House to the west, would be ideal for this purpose. Should the owner be unwilling to sell the property, the National Park Service should consider entering into a long term lease of the property for the purpose of providing off street parking and access to Pemberton's Headquarters. Another tract worth considering is the existing parking area (Tract 60) on the southeast corner of the block that is owned by Church of the Holy Trinity.

**Kansas City Southern Railroad:**

Kansas City Southern Railroad	Tax Maps 95-3, 107
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Recommendations: (See also *Land Protection Problems and Issues: Kansas City Southern Railroad.*)

The railroad, known historically as the Southern Railroad of Mississippi, played a vital role in the story of Vicksburg during the Civil War as it served as the city's supply and communications line. It was along this line, connecting Vicksburg with Jackson and, via Jackson, points elsewhere in the Confederacy that the heavy ordnance was brought to the city which helped make it the "Gibraltar of America." The railroad was also the target of Grierson's Raid in the early stage of the Vicksburg campaign that aimed at destroying the

Confederate line of supply and thus isolate Lt. Gen. John C. Pemberton and his Army of Vicksburg in the city.

The Kansas City Southern, which currently operates the line, seeks to relocate the line to an area south of the city. Should this occur, it is vital for the National Park Service to secure the stretch of line that runs through the park and retain the rails and ties in order to properly interpret the role of the railroad in the Vicksburg story.

#### **South Fort:**

01-107 Ameristar Casino                      Tax Map 108-10, Tract 5      0.15 acres

Recommendations: (See also: *Land Protection Problems and Issues: South Fort.*)

Situated along South Washington Street (historic Warrenton Road), South Fort is a detached unit of the park that currently affords no public access as a private parking area situated between South Fort and South Washington Street blocks public access to the unit. The park maintains exhibits at South Fort to interpret the important role it played during the siege and defense of Vicksburg, such as the shelling of Union forces that excavated Grant's Canal, which is another detached unit of the park situated across the Mississippi River in Madison Parish, Louisiana. Acquisition of the property should be a high priority in order to provide for public access to South Fort.

#### **Navy Circle:**

In 1928, a R.O.W. crossing of Navy Circle was granted to the Vicksburg Bridge and Terminal Company in preparation for constructing the U.S. Highway 80 bridge across the Mississippi River below Vicksburg. Then in 1958, a portion of Navy Circle was transferred to the Mississippi State Highway Commission for the purpose of constructing a weigh station. Further, in the early 1970s, the park administration entered into a Memorandum of Understanding or a Memorandum of Agreement with the State of Mississippi to allow the State construction of a parking area, in part on park property, for the Welcome Center. In addition, the agreement permitted the construction of a pedestrian bridge from the Mississippi State Welcome Center, over U.S. Highway 80, to the gun emplacement at Navy Circle. Although the pedestrian bridge and the part of the parking area that is on park property was constructed and is maintained by the State of Mississippi, the fact that it is on park property presents liability concerns for the National Park Service.

Recommendations: The National Park Service needs to evaluate liability concerns and the validity of existing agreements with the State of Mississippi and, if need be, proper agreements need to be drafted that absolve the park of liability should accident, injury, or death occur in the parking area or on the pedestrian bridge that are on park property.

### **Lands Quitclaimed to City of Vicksburg:**

PL 88-37 authorized the National Park Service to quitclaim 154 acres to the City of Vicksburg provided that the City “maintain the parklike character” of the land, otherwise it “shall revert to the United States if its parklike character is not maintained.” A follow-up document, signed in 1969, attempted to define the term “parklike,” but the term remains vague and agreement on a definition still does not exist between the park and City.

Recommendations: The National Park Service should evaluate the need to exercise the reverter clause relative to all or part of former park lands quitclaimed to the City; seek legislation to remove the reverter; or reach agreement with the City as to a definition of “parklike character.”

### **Lands Quitclaimed to Warren County:**

PL 88-37 authorized the National Park Service to quitclaim 24 acres to Warren County provided that the County “maintain the parklike character” of the land, otherwise it “shall revert to the United States if its parklike character is not maintained.” The land quitclaimed to the County consisted of a narrow strip of land on which Sherman Avenue and Sherman Avenue Spur were constructed along which roads a number of monuments and markers were placed by the War Department in the early years of the twentieth century. In wake of the land transfer authorized by PL 88-37, all but two of these monuments have been moved to within the current boundary of the park. These two monuments would be absorbed back into the park with the acquisition of desired lands near Grant’s Headquarters.

Recommendations: The National Park Service should seek legislation to remove the reverter on the 24 acres quitclaimed to Warren County by PL 88-37, but reclaim that portion of Sherman Avenue Spur encompassed by park corner stones 159-161-163 and 164-166-168 as it will consolidate the park’s boundary once the desired tracts near Grant’s Headquarters are acquired.

### **Private Inholdings and R.O.W.s:**

Private Inholdings: Four private inholdings exist within the current boundary of the park: Anshe Chesed Cemetery and the cemetery owned by the Bethlehem Burial Society (04-153). Neither of these cemeteries pose a threat to the resources of the park and no effort should be made to acquire these parcels, except in the event the bodies are removed and plans are made for development of the land. The other two parcels located along the historic Jackson Road, behind the Great Redoubt, (Tracts 02-124 and 03-126) should be acquired.

R.O.W.s: Several R.O.W.s exist within the present boundary of the park or the boundary as modified by this plan. Efforts should be made to petition the City of Vicksburg or the Warren County Board of Supervisors to extinguish these R.O.W.s, specifically:

- 02-159 King Road (platted road only)
- 02-160 Warren Clarke Road (platted road only)
- Dyer Road (platted road only)
- Rodenbaugh Drive
- 03-122 old Jackson Road (from Confederate Avenue west to park boundary)
- Old Yazoo City Road from park entrance at Fort Hill Drive north to its intersection with North Washington Street (opposite Haining Road). ( As Givens Road is also part of the old Yazoo City Road, it should be included in the petition for extinguishing the R.O.W.)
- Howe Lane