



U.S. Congressman  
**Nick Rahall**  
*WORKING FOR WEST VIRGINIANS*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
MARCH 25, 1994

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**WEST VIRGINIA'S CIVIL WAR SITES UNDER THREAT**  
**Rahall Says State Has 2 of 50 Top Ranked Nationwide**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. –** A Federal Advisory Commission has identified Rich Mountain and Harpers Ferry as two of 50 Civil War battlefield sites nationwide that should be the principal focus of battlefield preservation efforts until the year 2000, U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) announced today.

Rahall, a Member of the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, said that a report issued this week by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission identified the two West Virginia battlefields as "Priority I Civil War Battlefields" whose historical integrity is under threat.

"It is particularly important that we in West Virginia take actions to preserve our Civil War heritage because our State was born as a result of this conflict," Rahall said. "While the terrible trauma of that war should not be celebrated, nor should it be blotted from the national memory."

The Civil War Sites Advisory Commission was established by Congress to identify the Nation's historically significant Civil War sites, determine their importance and condition, and recommend alternatives to preserve and interpret them.

The Commission identified 13 other sites in West Virginia as being among the 384 most significant locations of Civil War armed conflicts nationwide. These 13 sites fell into a number of categories, ranging from battlefields with opportunities for comprehensive preservation to fragmented battlefields whose historical integrity has been destroyed by development.

Rich Mountain and Harpers Ferry, however, were identified by the Commission as two of 50 battlefields nationwide that represent principal strategic operations of the war that are still in good or fair condition but face high or moderate threats.

During the early stages of the War, in 1861 Union General George McClellan defeated Confederate Colonel John Pegram at Rich Mountain Pass. The battle contributed to the Confederates losing their foothold in the Monongahela Valley. Harpers Ferry was the site of a number of skirmishes between Union and Confederate troops during the War.

The Commission found that the primary threats to Civil War battlefields are from roads and residential and commercial development. Other threats are pollution related.

MORE

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According to the Commission, a number of actions should be taken to protect the most important sites. Its immediate action recommendations to the Congress and the Secretary of the Interior include the enactment of a "Civil War Heritage Preservation" law. This proposal envisions a cooperative effort among Federal, State, local governments and private groups to address battlefield preservation.

Among the initiatives recommended by the Commission is the establishment of a Civil War Battlefield Land Acquisition Program as part of the existing Historic Preservation Fund, and a Civil War Battlefield Stewardship Program through which the Federal government would enter into agreements with private land owners to restore or maintain historic settings.

**WEST VIRGINIA'S CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS  
LISTED BY PRESERVATION PRIORITIES  
(Public Agency, Where Applicable, Identified)**

**PRIORITY 1**

**Battlefields with critical need for nationwide action by the year 2000**

**Rich Mountain - None  
Harpers Ferry - National Park Service**

**PRIORITY 2**

**Battlefields with opportunities for comprehensive preservation**

**Smithfield Crossing - None  
Summit Point - None  
Hoke's Run - None**

**PRIORITY 3**

**Battlefields needing some additional protection**

**Carnifex Ferry - State Park  
Cheat Mountain - Forest Service  
Camp Allegheny - Forest Service  
Droop Mountain - State Park  
Shepherdstown - None  
Greenbrier River (Camp Bartow) - None  
Kessler's Cross Lanes - None**

**PRIORITY 4**

**Fragmented battlefields**

**Philippi - None  
Moorefield - None  
Princeton Courthouse - None**