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**CIVIL WAR PRESERVATION TRUST INCLUDES SOUTH MOUNTAIN, MARYLAND,  
In Report on Nation's Endangered Battlefields**

**(Washington, D.C.)** - At a press conference this morning, The Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) unveiled their 2010 Report "*History Under Siege: A Guide to America's Most Endangered Civil War Battlefields*" announcing the inclusion of South Mountain Battlefield in Middletown, MD. Best-Selling Author Jeff Shaara, serving as the Keynote Speaker, unveiled the CWPT report at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. The CWPT report identifies the most threatened Civil War sites in the United States and what can be done to rescue them.

South Mountain was included in the report in 2009 and was again included in 2010 due to the ongoing uncertain future of the historic property. At risk is Fox's Tavern, a well-preserved 18<sup>th</sup> century stone farmhouse situated on 135 acres that is on the original "traders' pass" over the ridge into West Virginia. In early September 1862, Confederate General Robert E. Lee launched an audacious invasion of the North. When a copy of his orders, wrapped around cigars, was discovered in a field by Union soldiers, federal commanders were able to move quickly against the vulnerable Confederates at the Battle of South Mountain. Over 5,000 Union and Confederate Troops engaged in the gruesome and bloody battle.

CPMV member Curtis Older, a direct descendent of George Fox who owned the historic Inn in the early 1800's, has written two books about the endangered battlefield. According to Mr. Older, "The location of this property along the old Sharpsburg Road meant that in addition to housing wounded troops from the Battle of South Mountain, it was also a witness to the history of Presidents and Generals from the mid 1700's. Losing this land to industrial development will lessen us all."

The land now sits serenely in the valley nestled against South Mountain where the Appalachian Trail winds its way through the mountains of the east coast of the United States. In December 2008, Dominion Transmission, Inc. (DTI) purchased 135 acres of battlefield land for a proposed \$55 million natural gas compression station, a plan that has been subsequently suspended with an option to re-file. Local citizens and preservationists have expressed opposition to the proposal because of its potential impact on the historic region.

"All across the country, our nation's irreplaceable battlefields – these tangible links to our shared history – are threatened by inappropriate development, misguided public policy, limited financial resources and, in some cases, simple apathy," said CWPT President James Lighthizer at the report's unveiling. "Next year marks the Sesquicentennial of the bloodiest conflict in our nation's history, and as we prepare for that seminal moment, it is an opportune time to shine a spotlight on the places that tell America's story."

Joining Lighthizer at the news conference was best-selling author Jeff Shaara, who also serves on the CWPT Board of Trustees. The author of nine *New York Times* bestsellers, Shaara's novels, including the Civil War-themed *Gods and Generals* and *The Last Full Measure*, have been praised by historians for their painstaking research. His only non-fiction work, *Jeff Shaara's Civil War Battlefields*, is a unique and personal tour across ten of America's most hallowed battlegrounds. In testament to his commitment to

historic preservation, Shaara donated the entire advance from the project toward battlefield protection efforts.

“Nothing creates an emotional connection between present and past like walking in the footsteps of our Civil War soldiers,” said Shaara. “I hope that by drawing attention to endangered Civil War battlefields, Americans will this see hallowed ground in a new way and understand that these sites must be preserved for future generations to experience.”

Also taking the podium at the news conference was Dr. Mark Snell, director of the George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War at Shepherd University. A Civil War scholar and retired army officer, Snell was appointed to the West Virginia Sesquicentennial of the Civil War Commission last summer by Governor Joe Manchin, and was subsequently elected vice-chairman.

“Particularly on the eve of the Civil War’s 150th anniversary, there is no more fitting commemoration of American valor than respectfully protecting the land where our soldiers fought and bled,” said Snell.

CPMV President, Elizabeth Bauer, echoes the words of Shaara, stating that the “CPMV believes in the need for energy infrastructure. However, industrial facilities should be built on industrial-zoned land. It is the choice to build upon this hallowed ground that concerns the community. We want citizens and residents to know that to build a compressor station on this site is to ignore the historical significance of this land and disrespect those who so selflessly gave their lives to defend this country in such a brutal battle.” She adds, “Think of hikers looking down from Appalachian Trail and seeing smokestacks and smelling fumes rather than reflecting upon the sacrifices of the soldiers during the Battle of South Mountain and enjoying the pleasant view of the Middletown Valley.”

Citizens for the Preservation of Middletown Valley (CPMV) is a grass-roots, non-political, citizen’s action organization seeking responsible and appropriate land use in Maryland’s agricultural and historic Middletown Valley. CPMV is dedicated to protecting the rich local history, rural landscapes, and the environment in Frederick County, Maryland. CPMV has organized opposition to the Dominion Transmission (DTI) planned Middletown gas compressor facility since the project was first announced in late 2007. The CPMV’s website is [www.cpmv.org](http://www.cpmv.org).

With 55,000 members, CWPT is the nation’s largest nonprofit organization in the United States whose mission is to preserve our nation’s endangered Civil War battlefields and to promote appreciation of these hallowed grounds through education and heritage tourism. CWPT has preserved more than 29,000 acres of battlefield land across the nation. CWPT’s website is [www.civilwar.org](http://www.civilwar.org).

*History Under Siege* is composed of two parts; the first section identifies the 10 most endangered battlefields in the nation, and the second section lists 15 additional “at risk” sites also confronted by serious threats. Sites discussed in the report range from the famous to the nearly forgotten, but at least part of each site is in danger of being lost forever. Battlefields were chosen based on geographic location, military significance, and the immediacy of current threats. In addition to South Mountain, other sites profiled in *History Under Siege* include where efforts are underway by additional local preservation organizations to prevent the destruction of these lands are:

**Camp Allegheny, W.Va., December 13, 1861:** Today, the scenic beauty of Camp Allegheny, West Virginia stands to be compromised by a field of 40-story-high wind turbines — 100 feet taller than the Statue of Liberty — to be built within view shed of the battlefield.

**Cedar Creek, Virginia, Oct. 19, 1864:** In 2008, the Frederick County Board of Supervisors approved a massive expansion of the mine operating adjacent to Cedar Creek, which would destroy nearly 400 acres of battlefield land crucial to telling the story of this decisive struggle.

**Fort Stevens, Washington, D.C., July 11–12, 1864:** Last year, a church adjacent to the fort applied for a zoning exemption to build an immense community center complex. The new construction would tower over the fort, significantly degrading the visitor experience.

**Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, July 1–3, 1863:** In 2006, the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board rejected

a proposal to build a slots parlor near Gettysburg's East Cavalry Field, citing widespread public opposition to the plan. However, earlier this year the same chief investor rolled the dice again and announced plans for another Gettysburg casino. Although smaller than the previous proposal, this casino would be only one half-mile from Gettysburg National Military Park.

**Picacho Peak, Arizona, April 15, 1862:** Although Picacho Peak State Park is a popular tourist destination, it will close to the public on June 3, 2010, due to drastic cuts in the state budget – less than one year before the sesquicentennial of the war,

**Pickett's Mill, Ga., May 27, 1864:** Although Pickett's Mill Battlefield State Historic Site is widely regarded as thoroughly preserved and interpreted, the park was forced to reduce its hours significantly due to budget cuts, and last autumn it was inundated by floodwaters that destroyed footbridges and a portion of the historic mill.

**Thoroughfare Gap, Va., August 28, 1862:** In February, consultants began seeking comments from the preservation community regarding a proposal to build a 150-foot-tall communications tower within the core battlefield area at Thoroughfare Gap. Although construction of Interstate 66 in the 1960s saw portions of the mountain gap widened, the area retains much of its rural, scenic beauty.

**Wilderness, Virginia, May 5–7, 1864:** In August 2009, the Orange County, Va. Board of Supervisors approved a massive commercial center featuring a Walmart and four retailers at the gateway to the historic battlefield. A lawsuit to block the project is pending.

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*(For an embargoed copy of the report and other materials, visit us online at <http://www.civilwar.org/embar>*