

# GLORIETA BATTLEFIELD COALITION

Protecting the Civil War battlefield at Glorieta Pass, New Mexico and other  
Civil War Sites in New Mexico through preservation and public education

Learn more about our coalition on the web at [www.glorietapass.org](http://www.glorietapass.org)

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## President's Report: January 2009

Significance of the Glorieta Pass Battlefield: The Battle of Glorieta Pass actually covers three significant phases that took place March 26-28, 1862. Called by some historians the "Gettysburg of the West," it was here Federal forces checked Confederate dreams of territorial expansion. After enjoying early successes and setting up the Confederate Territory of Arizona, the vanguard of the Texan invasion marched out of Santa Fe determined to seize Fort Union – the major supply base in the Southwest. At Glorieta Pass they met a mixed force of U.S. Regular troops, local militia, and Colorado volunteers equally determined to stop the Confederate advance.

After an inconclusive skirmish on March 26 in Apache Canyon, on March 28, 1862, the Texans marched into the Glorieta Pass on the Santa Fe Trail. The opposing forces clashed near Pigeon's Ranch. The Confederates drove the Federals back and held the field at the end of the day, only to learn a Federal flanking force had fallen on their rear and destroyed the Confederate wagons and supplies. Thereafter, the Confederates began a long and arduous retreat back to Texas. The Confederate hopes for a Southwest territory that would stretch to the Pacific Ocean, and gaining control of the gold fields in Colorado, came to an end.

Threat: Currently, two units covering portions of the battlefield are under NPS control. Potential development threatens unprotected areas. Efforts are being made to acquire additional land within the units to better preserve the battlefield and make it more accessible to visitors.

The battlefield is further threatened by a state highway that runs through the battlefield within feet of historical structures that were part of Pigeon's Ranch at the time of the battle. The Glorieta Battlefield Coalition, together with support from the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT), support studies and efforts to relocate the highway away from the battlefield or implement other mitigation measures. Such is necessary to restore the battlefield site and allow visitors to tour the battlefield safely.

CWSAC classified Glorieta Pass as a Priority I, Class A Battlefield – its highest designation.

The Civil War Preservation Trust has designated Glorieta Pass as one of the most endangered battlefield sites in the country.

The Glorieta Battlefield Coalition is a 501(c)(3) entity.

### Current Goals of the Glorieta Battlefield Coalition:

Continue efforts to relocate New Mexico Highway 50 away from battlefield or implementation of other mitigation measures

Support and assist in the acquisition of further lands critical to the battlefield.

Encourage, advocate and otherwise support the design and construction of trails and parking areas with interpretive markers to allow visitors to gain a greater understanding and visual experience of the battlefield, with emphasis on the significance of the battle, the events leading up to the battle, and the long term results to both sides and the surrounding territory. Support efforts for separate Visitor's Center for Pigeon's Ranch area.

Educate the public on the significance of the battle and importance of preservation efforts pertaining thereto.

Support legislation for land swap of excess U.S. Forest Service land for private land within the Cañoncito (Johnson's Ranch) unit of the Glorieta Battlefield Park, substantially increasing public ownership within that unit. Key acquisition. Contact Jim Houghton for further information.

Reach out and engage various groups and organizations to participate in planning, design, and construction of trails, visitor's center, and other improvements to the battlefield. (Friends of Pecos and other interested groups or organizations.)

Work with other groups for the protection and preservation of other significant Civil War sites in New Mexico.

See attached memo with respect to specific 2009 GBC objectives.

### Other significant information:

A study performed by Dr. Frank Ward of New Mexico State University determined economic benefits under the scenario that Glorieta Battlefield were fully restored and made safe for public visitation. The study demonstrated that opening Glorieta Battlefield to public visitation had numerous positive economic benefits, including providing a sustainable, stabilizing force in the rural economy of both the Pecos area and the broader tourism economy of New Mexico. In short, Dr. Ward's data demonstrated that tourism associated with a restored battlefield would generate over \$31 million in annual income in San Miguel and Santa Fe counties and 182 new jobs within ten years of the battlefield being restored and open to the public. Copies of the study are available from the Glorieta Battlefield Coalition.

The Glorieta Battlefield has been recognized by the Civil War Preservation Trust as one of the 10 most endangered battlefield sites. The Civil War Preservation Trust is dedicated to the preservation of battlefield sites and has recognized both the importance and significance of the Battle of Glorieta Pass.

In listing the site, the Trust has expressed concern over neglect and public indifference that is allowing perhaps irreparable damages to structures of historical significance within the Pigeon's Ranch Unit of the Battlefield

Progress Report for 2008 Below are listed the significant events for us in 2008 as tied into our 2008 Objectives

Improve Public Awareness/Public Support for Glorieta Battlefield.

- o Project with the New Mexico Confederate Historical Society, the New Mexico Division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the Texas Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy to plan, design, fund, and construct the Texas Vista project. As reported in the President's January 2008 Report, the Park Service accepted my request to develop special vistas at selected points near the trail in which the major groups who participated in the Battle – the Texans, the Colorado Volunteers, the U.S. Regulars, the New Mexico Volunteers – will develop special interpretive exhibits from the perspective of each of these four groups. During 2007 and 2008, I was able to work with the New Mexico Confederate Historical Society, the New Mexico Division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the Texas Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy to design, fund, and construct the Texas Vista. The decision was made to start with the Texas Vista as these organizations expressed an interest in the project and a willingness to raise funds for the Texas Vista. The Vista consists of three panels and two benches. It is located with a panoramic view looking over the final phase of the Pigeon's Ranch Battlefield. The interpretive panels give visitors the perspective of the Texan invasion of New Mexico as well as their achievements at the Battle of Glorieta Pass. In August 2008, we co-sponsored a reception and dedication event with the SCV and UDC. Over 60 attendees came for the dedication event. In addition to a reception recognizing the cooperative efforts of the UDC and SCV, a ceremony led by the UDC at the Texas Vista site not only dedicated the site but honored each of the Texans who lost their lives at Glorieta Pass. Direct descendants of some of the combatants at Glorieta Pass attended, including the descendants of Major John Shropshire who was killed while leading a flanking movement at the Pigeon's Ranch phase of the battle. It was a wonderful event. The Texas Vista site is a wonderful addition to the interpretive and educational efforts along the battlefield trail. We encourage all of our members and visitors to come see it.

The Texas Vista project was featured as the lead article in the January-February edition of the *Confederate Veteran* magazine. Go to the website of the New Mexico Division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans which has a link to the article.

- o Improvements to the UDC/Colorado Monument Site. In 1939, the Texas Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, after years of study and fundraising, acquired a one-acre parcel and dedicated a monument to the Texas Volunteers who fought at Glorieta Pass. In 1995, Colorado groups

supported and installed next to the Texas UDC monument a monument to the Colorado Volunteers. For years these two monuments have been virtually hidden from view of our visitors. With the help of the Texas Division of the UDC and special donations made by Glorieta Battlefield Coalition (GBC) officers, we designed and completed construction of the improvements to the monument site. A special thanks also go to the GBC members Dennis and Pat Eker who provided the gravel to improve the parking area. Fencing has been installed with a message board which provides visitors with information on the Glorieta Battlefield Park and the stories behind the Texas and Colorado monuments. Superintendent Kathy Billings and her staff, particularly Jeff Brown and Christine Beekman, provided valuable assistance to make this project a reality. Please stop by and see the monument site during your next visit to Glorieta.

- Participation at the Las Golondrinas Civil War Weekend (May 2008). We participated in the Las Golondrinas weekend in May 2008. For our members who have never been able to attend, this is our Civil War Reenactment weekend that's held in a 19<sup>th</sup> Century Spanish village setting that is ideal for the reenactors and visitors to enjoy the battle reenactments and camps of the reenactors. It gave us an additional opportunity to educate visitors and the general public on our projects at Glorieta. Additional pledges of financial support were made within the reenactment community during this weekend. We welcomed some new members to the Glorieta Battlefield Coalition.
- Presentations at the Glorieta Baptist Conference Center. Just down the road from the Glorieta Battlefield is the Glorieta Baptist Conference Center, which is a large resort-like property that provides families an opportunity to come to New Mexico in a faith-based setting and enjoy some rest and relaxation in the New Mexico mountains. We continue to work closely with the Conference Center to provide educational programs for the visitors on the Battle of Glorieta Pass. Thanks to Randy Egan and Hal Smith at the Conference Center for their support of our educational efforts.
- Partner with Friends of Pecos to support Civil War Preservation Trust meeting in Santa Fe in February 2008. We supported the Civil War Preservation Trust's Board Meeting held in Santa Fe February 7-9, 2008. We provided tour site guides. The Trust advised us that more of their Board members came to this conference than any prior Board Meeting. This event provided us the unique opportunity to show Trust Board members and major donors our projects and accomplishments and thank them for their continued support. The Trust has committed resources to assist in land acquisitions that will help us expand the land under control for the battlefield that will save the land from development risk. We very much appreciate their help and welcome their visit here.

Increase Active Membership. In addition to our core membership and supporters in New Mexico, we continue to welcome new members outside of New Mexico.

Through our website we provide information to visitors and a point of contact for additional information on the Glorieta Battlefield and other Civil War sites in New Mexico.

In addition to our individual members, we continue to appreciate the support we receive from various organizations and Civil War Round Tables. In addition to support given by the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the United Daughters of the Confederacy, we have received grants from the Order of the Southern Cross and generous donations from the G.W. Lee Civil War Round Table from Howell, Michigan, and the Chicago Civil War Round Table.

Thank you for your continued support. We hope to see our members and supporters out here in 2009.

## Specific Projects at the Battlefield:

- Since the launch of the Battlefield Trail Project in March 2007, significant progress has been made in the design and construction of the trail. We are supporting the Friends of Pecos who are the lead organization, together with the Park Service, in the construction of the trail. A special thanks goes to GBC members Dennis and Pat Eker who have generously contributed rock and gravel for the Trail that has allowed us to utilize donated funds for other needs such as the roads and parking area. With the help of the youth "trail" corps, and efforts of Park staff, a dedication event is being planned for June 14, 2009 to "open the trail" to the public. Ten interpretive markers are being planned. Foot bridges have been completed thanks in part to a generous donation from the Teel/Vordermark family. The Friends of Pecos are working on securing both federal and state grants to assist in the funding needs of the trail. A special thanks is due for their efforts as well as the efforts of Park Staff.

Visit our website which will provide updates on the trail project as well as the vista projects

- Continue development of the Vista projects. The Glorieta Battlefield Coalition continues to take a lead role in the development of special vistas at selected points near or along the trail in which the major groups participated in the battle – the Texans, the Colorado Volunteers, the U.S. Regulars, the New Mexico Volunteers – will develop special interpretive exhibits from the perspective of each of these four groups.

The Texas Vista was completed and dedicated in August 2008. Funds have been committed for a New Mexico Volunteers vista project. Following the trail dedication in June, further efforts will be made to design, fund, and construct the U.S. Regulars vista. Efforts are being made with Colorado historical groups to support the Colorado vista. If any recipients of this newsletter have a special interest in helping on any of these three vista projects, please contact Jim Houghton, President of the GBC, at his contact information listed on page one of this report.

- Relocation of State Road 50. Mitigation efforts (lower speed) through the battlefield area.
- Johnson Land Exchange. Senator Jeff Bingaman continues to take the leadership role in this land exchange bill by his submission of new legislation (Senate Bill S-216) in early 2007 to obtain passage. We were not successful in getting enough support in the House and political bickering between the parties prevented passage in the last Congress. We will again be looking to the leadership of Senator Bingaman and Senator Tom Udall (who used to be the Representative in the Glorieta district) and new representatives Ben Lujan and Martin Heinrich to support this land exchange. If members or recipients of

this report are willing, please contact Senator Bingaman's office in support of this land exchange.

- o Improvements to the Website. As more and more of our members and visitors contact us through our website, a concerted effort will be made in 2009 to update and improve our website and links. More pictures and photos of events will be available. A volunteer has agreed to provide links for current events not only at G lorieta but other Civil War events in New Mexico that will be kept on a six-month streaming "current events" calendar. After this year, the future President's Reports and updates will be posted on the website rather than mailings, so we encourage all our members to go to our website to get updates on activities. The website will not only provide information on the G lorieta Battlefield Coalition and activities at G lorieta, but will be an excellent source of general Civil War information in New Mexico. Please visit the site and contact me if you have any suggestions for improvement.

I hope this newsletter shares with you the pride I have in our accomplishments this year and how excited I am for the opportunities we have to keep moving forward in 2009. I am not able in this report to express all the thanks I have for everyone who has worked with us, assisted us, and helped us in what we are trying to accomplish. No report would be complete without a special thanks to our friends at the Friends of Pecos, and particularly Rich and Jean Higgins and Bill Zunkel, who have taken a leadership role in the trail project and have given generously of their time and funds to make the Ridge Trail Project a reality. To the members and supporters of the G lorieta Battlefield Coalition, please keep visiting our website, please contact me with any questions you have, please help support us and, most of all, if you have occasion to visit G lorieta please let me know so that I can thank you personally for your interest and support. Tours of the battlefield are given in accordance with schedules published on the NPS Pecos website at [www.nps.gov/pecos](http://www.nps.gov/pecos). Best wishes for a wonderful 2009.

Please join the G lorieta Battlefield Coalition. Assist us in our mission and goals in honor of the hundreds of American soldiers who put their lives on the line and made the ultimate sacrifice for what they believed in at the Battle of G lorieta Pass.

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## 2009 GBC Objectives

### **Continue Improved Public Awareness/Public Support:**

Participation and support in trail dedication event of the Glorieta Battlefield Trail in June, 2009.

Participation at Las Golondrinas Civil War Weekend (May 2009).

### **Increase Active Membership**

**Work with Other Interested Groups and Other Related Organizations (Friends of Pecos, reenactor groups, Civil War roundtables, CWPT, UDC, SCV, SUV, OSC, etc.)**

### **Specific Projects at the Battlefield:**

Continue design, funding, and construction of the Glorieta Battlefield Trail with related interpretative and parking needs and support the Friends of Pecos and the NPS at their planned dedication event on June 14, 2009.

Continued support in the design, funding, and construction of other trails on the battlefield site itself that will open "Sharpshooter's Ridge."

Special focus on continued development of the vista projects. Design, development, and planning for the three other vista projects (New Mexico Volunteers, U.S. Regulars, and Colorado Volunteers) following the concepts of the successful Texas Vista Project.

Continue improvements to the Texas UDC and Colorado monument sites on the Battlefield.

Passage of the land exchange for Johnson's Ranch unit.

Continued meetings with the National Park Service on the study of State Road 50 and potential mitigation efforts to improve visitor experience.

Investigate and develop costs and plans for construction of a Visitor's Center at the Pigeon's Ranch site with related issues (location, cost of improvement, cost of operation, and other park issues).

Support efforts of the Civil War Preservation Trust and Friends of Pecos for acquisition of additional land to be dedicated to the Glorieta Battlefield site.

### **Fundraising Events**

