



Updated April 2, 2020

# American Battlefield Protection Program

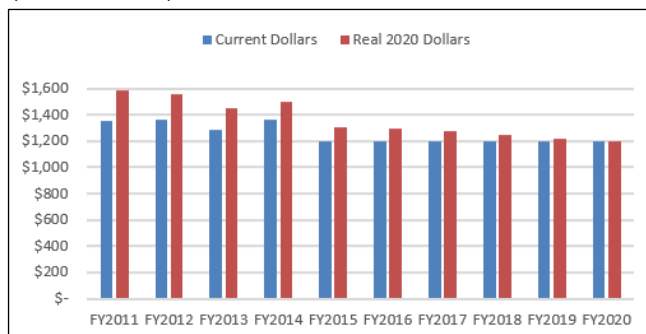
The American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) promotes the preservation of significant sites where historic battles were fought on American soil. Initiated by the Secretary of the Interior in 1991, the program was officially authorized by Congress in 1996 in the American Battlefield Protection Act (P.L. 104-333; 54 U.S.C. §§308101-308103) and is currently administered by the National Park Service (NPS). For most of its existence, the ABPP comprised two distinct competitive grant programs: the Battlefield Planning Grant Program and the Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant Program. The 116<sup>th</sup> Congress authorized two new grant programs in 2019, bringing the total number of ABPP grant programs to four (see “New ABPP Grant Programs”).

## ABPP Planning Grant Program

Under the Battlefield Planning Grant Program, NPS awards grants to groups, institutions, organizations, governments (local, state, and tribal), and federal entities sponsoring preservation projects at historic battlefields. The program supports projects that include site identification and documentation, planning and consensus building, and educational programs, among others. Any battlefield or associated site on American soil is eligible for funding under this grant program. Planning grants are not awarded for land acquisition or capital improvements. Applicants are encouraged but not required to provide matching funds or in-kind services for these projects.

**Figure 1. Appropriations for ABPP Planning Grant Program: FY2011-FY2020**

(\$ in thousands)



**Sources:** CRS, with data from annual NPS Budget Justifications for FY2013-FY2021. Figures were taken from the volume published two years following the fiscal year in question (e.g., for FY2015, figures are from the FY2017 document). FY2020 figures reflect enacted totals.

**Notes:** Totals do not reflect appropriations for grant administration. Reported totals differ from the appropriated totals, as obligations may carry over from year to year. Current dollars have been converted to real 2020 dollars using the GDP (Chained) Price Index column in Table 10.1 from the Office of Management and Budget,

Historical Tables, at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/historical-tables/>.

## Authorization and Funding History

NPS first awarded Battlefield Planning grants for preservation projects at historic battlefields in 1992 under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior. In 1996, Congress authorized the program under the American Battlefield Protection Act. At that time, Congress authorized to be appropriated \$3 million annually for a duration of 10 years. Congress permanently authorized discretionary appropriations at \$3 million annually for the program in 2009 (P.L. 111-11).

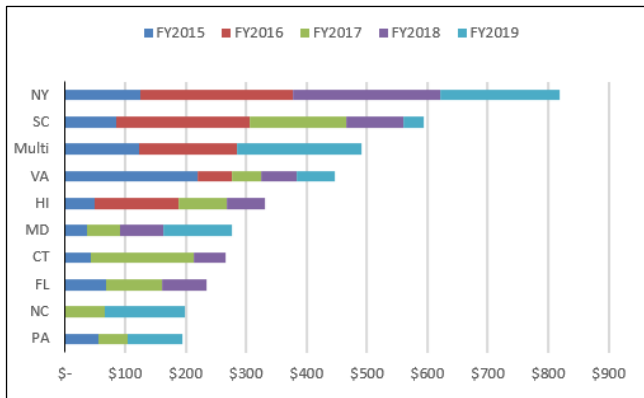
Battlefield Planning grants are funded as part of NPS appropriations within the agency’s National Recreation and Preservation (NR&P) account. Appropriations for the program are split between two subaccounts within the NR&P account: direct grant-making funds are provided under the “Cultural Programs” activity, and grant administration funding is provided under a separate “Grants Administration” activity. Typically, Congress has not funded the program at the full authorized level. Actual appropriations for the program have remained unchanged at under \$1.2 million annually since FY2015 (**Figure 1**).

## Recent Grant-Making Trends

According to NPS, the program has helped to protect and enhance battlefields through 620 projects in 42 states and territories. Individual project funding historically has ranged from \$5,000 to more than \$100,000. From FY2015 to FY2019, total annual grant funding averaged roughly \$1.16 million. New York received the largest amount of program funding during this period, at just over \$800,000 for 15 projects, followed by South Carolina and Virginia. See **Figure 2** for an overview of the 10 states that received the largest amount of funding from FY2015 to FY2019.

**Figure 2. FY2015-FY2019 Planning Grants: 10 Most-Awarded States**

(current \$ in thousands)



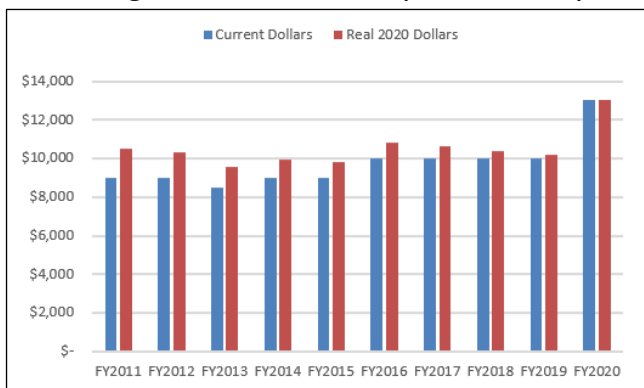
**Source:** National Park Service (NPS), “Battlefield Planning Grants,” at <http://www.nps.gov/subjects/battlefields/battlefield-planning-grants.htm>.

**Notes:** Multi = Grants awarded for projects that cross multiple states. This includes \$340,840 in grants awarded to Maryland-based organizations the American Battlefield Trust and the Civil War Trust, and a \$150,659 grant awarded to Temple University in Pennsylvania.

### ABPP Land Acquisition Grant Program

Under the ABPP Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant Program, grants are awarded to state and local governments seeking fee simple acquisition of eligible battlefield land or the acquisition of permanent, protective interests (easements) in battlefield land. Eligible sites for Battlefield Acquisition grants are limited to Revolutionary War, War of 1812, or Civil War battlefield lands. Previously, eligible battlefields were limited to Civil War battlefields listed in the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission’s (CWSAC) 1993 *Report on the Nation’s Civil War Battlefields*. In 2014, P.L. 113-291 amended the statute to include Revolutionary War and War of 1812 battlefields (specifically, those listed in the 2007 *The Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Historic Preservation Study*). Grants awarded through this program require at least a 50% nonfederal cost share (54 U.S.C. §308103(d)).

**Figure 3. Appropriations for ABPP Land Acquisition Grant Program: FY2011-FY2020 (\$ in thousands)**



**Sources:** CRS, with data from annual NPS Budget Justifications for FY2013-FY2021. Figures were taken from the volume published two years following the fiscal year in question (e.g., for FY2015, figures are from FY2017 document). FY2020 figures reflect enacted totals.

**Notes:** Reported totals differ from the appropriated totals, as obligations may carry over from year to year. Current dollars have been converted to real 2020 dollars (see note in **Figure 1**).

### Authorization and Funding History

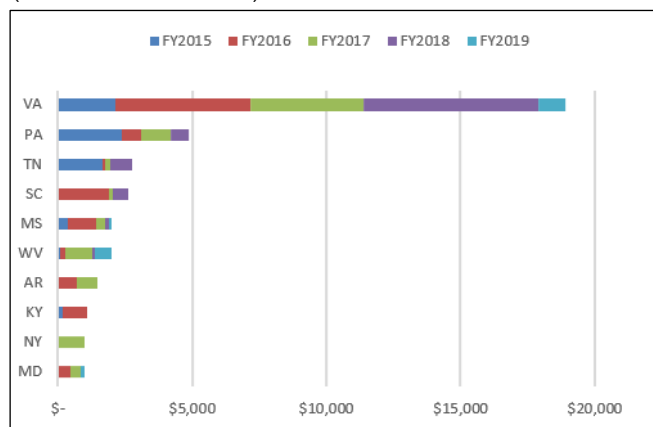
Funding for the Land Acquisition Grant Program comes from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF; 54 U.S.C. §§200301 et seq.). Appropriations from the fund are provided to NPS in its Land Acquisition and State Assistance account, under the “Federal Land Acquisition” activity (although the grants are not for federal acquisition but for state and local acquisition). Congress first appropriated funding for this program in 1998 as part of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (P.L. 105-277, §131). In 2002, Congress authorized appropriations for the program (P.L. 107-359), providing up to \$10 million for each of FY2004 through FY2008. Appropriations were reauthorized at that level multiple times, most recently in 2014 (P.L. 113-235 and P.L. 113-291). Congress provided funding at the full authorized level from FY2016 to FY2019 (**Figure 3**) and at less than that amount between FY2010 and FY2015. In 2019, Congress reauthorized the program through FY2028, increasing authorized appropriations to \$18 million per year (P.L. 116-94). For FY2020, Congress appropriated \$13 million for the program.

### Recent Grant-Making Trends

Since FY2015, ABPP has awarded competitive grants to 15 different states (**Figure 4**). The state that received the most grant funding between FY2015 and FY2019 was Virginia, which has received over \$18 million in grant funding since FY2015. This is nearly four times the total funding awarded to the second-most-awarded state, Pennsylvania, which has received just under \$5 million in ABPP Land Acquisition funding during this time period.

**Figure 4. 10 Most-Awarded States: FY2015-FY2019**

(current \$ in thousands)



**Sources:** FY2015-FY2017 totals are from NPS, “Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants,” at <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/battlefields/battlefield-land-acquisition-grant-program.htm>, accessed on September 16, 2019. FY2018 and FY2019 totals were provided to CRS by NPS.

### New ABPP Grant Programs

In 2019, Congress authorized two new ABPP grant programs as part of the Further Consolidated

Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-94): the Battlefield Interpretation Modernization Grant Program (54 U.S.C. §308104) and the Battlefield Restoration Grant Program (54 U.S.C. §308105). The Battlefield Interpretation Modernization Grant Program funds projects and programs that deploy technology to modernize battlefield interpretation and education. Eligible sites are limited to Revolutionary War, War of 1812, or Civil War battlefield lands. The Battlefield Restoration Grant Program provides funding for projects that restore day-of-battle conditions on land preserved under the ABPP Land Acquisition Program.

Both programs require a minimum 1:1 federal to nonfederal match for project proposals. Congress authorized up to \$1 million in appropriations for each program for each of FY2020 through FY2028. As of March 2020, NPS has not yet published guidelines or notices regarding funding cycles for either program.

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